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HIS COUSIN, THE DOCTOR.

A Story.

BY

MINNIE WILLIS BAINES,

AUTHOR OF "THE SILENT LAND."

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PREFACE.

EAR READER,—I have not undertaken in this book a complete refutation of the doctrine known as "Christian Science," but have endeavored to show how, through its own innumerable inconsistencies, it refutes itself; also to prove, by its avowed articles of faith, the impossibility of being, at one and the same time, a logical Christian Scientist and a Bible Christian.

The principal aim of my argument is to convince thoughtless Christians, who have embraced this "science" in the belief that its teachings lead to a higher Christian life, that, on the contrary, they tend toward the rejection of Christ and the Holy Scriptures, toward the destruction of man's belief in the resurrection of the individual from the dead, and his eternal existence as a glorified spirit in the companionship of Christ and his risen saints.

M. W. B.

SPRINGFIELD, O., 1891.



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HIS COUSIN, THE DOCTOR.

CHAPTER I.

returned, somewhat unexpectedly as to the exact train, from a six months' stay in the "far West." This stay had not been altogether a trip for sight-seeing purposes and the acquisition of topographical knowledge, nor yet for the proving of a land claim which was in dispute; but it was a composite affair which blended the trio of designs, and had consumed more time than he had intended to dispose of in this manner.

He had arrived on an evening train, about an hour too late for tea at his mother's hospitable table; but after that delighted lady had embraced him again and again, and cried over him as she did n't do when he went away (women are strange creatures), she remembered that he must be hungry, and gave elaborate orders to the girl for an appetizing supper to be speedily brought in.

Mr. Bartlett did ample justice to the meal.

His digestion was good, and for the last few weeks he had been roughing it in a Rocky Mountain iron camp, where the *chef d'œuvre* of the *chef* was saleratus biscuit, sometimes supplemented by side-meat.

As he drained his tea-cup for the second time, and finished the last crumb of a generous section of rich cake, he exclaimed, with real fervor:

"I'm glad to be back, mother. Nobody ever cooks like a fellow's own mother and the servants she trains."

"I made that cake myself, Frank. Nora's rather slow about learning to make good cake," said Mrs. Bartlett, pleased with the praise of her idolized son.

"Everything going on as usual at home? How's Sadie? Where is she?"

Mrs. Bartlett pursed up her lips, and mysteriously answered:

"There is n't any Sadie. Sadie 's gone."
"Gone?"

Francis Bartlett looked blankly at his mother, and his face seemed to have turned a shade paler as he looked.

She nodded, and her expression was full of the importance of some knowledge which she was withholding from him. "Please do n't be mysterious, mother; I never did like mystery. Where has she gone? She certainly is n't dead, or you would have let me know."

"No, not dead. Sadie has vanished into the past. There is a young lady residing here now, known to the town as Dr. Sarah Katherine Spencer. She is n't in, just now; she's lecturing over at the G. A. R. Hall, this evening, on Theosophy. Her last lecture was on Occultism."

Mrs. Bartlett, having fired this unexpected shot, sat back, and looked at her son triumphantly.

"Theosophy! Sadie!!"

These were the only words he could utter, in his astonished bewilderment.

"Yes," said Mrs. Bartlett, demurely, "and her next is on Esoteric Buddhism."

Mr. Bartlett leaned back, and burst into a loud, contemptuous laugh.

"Sadie!" ejaculated he. "Why, she knows about as much on those subjects as our Maltese kitten."

"You may think that, privately, but it would take nerve on your part to tell her so. You've been gone six months, Francis. During three of those months, Sarah Katherine

attended lectures and studied books. Now she is a full-fledged Christian Scientist and Mental Healer, instructing 'the heathen which sit in darkness.'"

"Christian Scientist! Why, I did n't know Sadie had ever been converted! When did it happen?"

"Well, as to that, she does n't profess that she ever has been. She says a great many—most, indeed—of the healers are Christians, but others are not; and that it is n't at all necessary."

"Well, it strikes me," answered he, a little severely, "that Miss Sadie is putting profane hands on a holy ark."

"Um-m," commented Mrs. Bartlett, in a non-committal way, scenting, with delight, from afar off, the inevitable coming battle between her son Francis and Dr. Sarah Katherine Spencer.

"You called her 'doctor,'" said he, presently; "did you mean that she actually attempts to cure sick people?"

"Nothing less than that."

They had pushed back their chairs from the table, and Nora had come in to clear away the dishes and remove the cloth. She was proceeding with her duties, as Mr. Bartlett remarked: "She does n't succeed, of course?"

"Ask Nora," replied his mother.

Thus adjured, he turned his attention to the pretty little servant, who blushed rosy-red under his glance.

"Well, Nora," said he, "have you been sick, and has Miss Spencer doctored you and cured you?"

"Indeed, sir, and she did, then," stammered she.

"What was the matter? Anything serious?"

"Indeed, sir, my head did ache me awful one day, and I asked her could she give me something that would make it quit; then she came, and sat down in the kitchen by the window, and began to talk to me that pleasant about everything else, that I 'most forgot about it; only once in awhile it would be that bad I could n't help telling her about it again, and asking her to cure it?"

"And what did she say, Nora?"

"Well, sir, she sat up there in that splintbottomed rocking-chair, in her white sailorblouse and blue skirt, and just smiled at me. Then she said, solemn like: 'Nora Brown, you're not sick—you are not sick!" "How did that seem to make you feel?—better?"

Nora laughed.

"It made me kinder mad at first. I says to her that I thought I oughter know whether I was sick or not, and that my mother used to have headaches like this; but if she did n't want to cure me, she need n't mind it."

"And what did she say to that?"

"Why, sir, she stopped smiling right away, and she said, sorter serious: 'I know you think you 're sick, Nora, but you must not think so any longer; for sickness is sin, and—'" Here Nora broke off suddenly, saying: "You must excuse me, Mr. Francis, but I can not remember all her big words. I know she said something about its being a 'state of inharmony,' and—"

"She told you there was 'only a seeming law of heredity and contagion in the natural soul,' did n't she?" asked Mrs. Bartlett.

"Yes, ma'am. And she said something about seeming sickness being a punishment for either individual or universal sin, and that it was wicked to be sick. That of course I was not sick, but I must say to myself that I was well; because 'all that is not of love is of self.'"

"What did she mean by that, Nora?" asked Mr. Francis.

"I did n't quite sense it," replied the girl; "but she said, after a bit: 'It is only seeming. You must say, I am well! and then, presently, your head will not ache.'"

"Well, did it work, Nora?"

"Yes, indeed, sir. I kept saying it all that day, and the next day, in the afternoon, my head-ache was all gone."

"A remarkable cure," said Mr. Francis; and as Nora, questioned no further, carried out the tray containing the *débris* of the meal, the young man turned to his mother, and said:

"Why did n't you write to me about this?"

"You know why, Frank. Sadie is self-willed, and of age. It would have done no good, and you might have written her something she would have resented, and there would have been a breach between you, which would have been unnecessary."

"Sly, cunning, maneuvering mamma!" said he, playfully. "I think you might as well 'name his name, and let half his face be seen through the lion's neck, and tell them plainly, he is Snug, the joiner.'"

"Whatever do you mean, Francis?"

"Quoting a little Shakespeare," answered

he, lightly. Then, taking out his watch, he asked: "At what time does the doctor's show come to a close?"

"O, there's an hour of it yet," answered his mother.

"I think I'll stroll around to the G. A. R., and see how Dr. Spencer looks on the platform."

After the door had closed behind him, he heaved a little sigh, and soliloquized:

"Yes; mother would like to keep cousin Sadie's fortune in the family. As for me, I don't care for the money, but—"

With the click of the gate the soliloquy came to an end.

The G. A. R. Hall was crowded with a "large and enthusiastic" audience—in fact, Francis Bartlett was obliged to stand in an open doorway, with his neighbor's elbow in uncomfortable proximity to his ribs.

The young lecturer stood upon a slightly raised platform at the further end of the room. She was tall and very slight, with a great deal of blonde hair, put up in a loose knot at the back of her head, and some few short locks curling about her temples and small, delicate ears. She wore a straight, black gown, high in the neck, with a narrow rim of white picot-edged

ribbon about her throat. The sleeves, which reached her elbows, were met by the long, wrinkled wrists of soft tan gloves. She held her manuscript in her hand, but glanced away from it now and then, as she uttered some well-rounded sentence containing a favorite sentiment.

Francis Bartlett looked at her for a little time, admiring her graceful pose, and the dignified simplicity of her costume, before he began to listen to what she was saying.

The first period which, to make use of Nora's vernacular, he "sensed," was to this effect:

"St. Paul told the Romans that God's wrath 'was imanifest against ungodliness and unrighteousness in men, because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse.'

"He spoke, you will perceive, of manifestations and revelations made directly to the human consciousness itself—that inward illumination concerning his will and purpose

to which we of to-day, in a broader, higher, and superior sense, lay claim.

"Theosophy, wisdom in the things of God, may not be clearly demonstrable as a science, but, like the miracles of Jesus, it is above all classified knowledge, and to be believed in for 'the very works' sake;' both these 'works' having for their aim 'the healing of the natious.'

"It differs from revealed religion, inasmuch as the former comes through inward inspiration, by means of which the mind is given a direct insight into the will and pleasure of the great and otherwise unfathomable intelligence which moves the universe.

"Emerson said: 'When the Master of the universe has points to carry in his government, he impresses his will in the structure of minds.' Granting this, as we claim we may, you may readily see how in past ages this illuminating power struggled to pierce the darkness of ignorance, prejudice, and superstition existing in the hearts and beliefs of mankind; succeeding, in a sufficient degree, even among those who did not worship the one God, to stand as a prophecy of its more complete and final victory in our own and future generations; 'God having provided some better thing concerning

us, that, apart from us, they should not be made perfect.'

"The old Greeks accepted, without question, the mythological annals of close and intimate relationship between gods and worshipers. Instance the condescension of Pallas, when she became the mentor of Telemachus.

"This manifestation, written on the heart; this inward revelation, independent of reason, and often opposed to reason, so called, was then but imperfectly translated and understood—was but a shadow of the better things reserved for us; and while, in itself, an indicator of certain truth, it was so commingled with the error of their vain imaginings that they gave heed to auguries, and had faith in Pythias and Sibyls, who delivered the ambiguous messages of the oracles. The wind in the vocal oaks and the tinkle of the brazen basins was, to them, the voice of a god.

"This law, faintly lettered and poorly read by the Gheber, caused him to see his god in the spiral whirl of the rising flame—a shadow of that pentecostal fire which sat in cloven tongues on the disciples' heads.

"The Egyptian Platonists caught symbols of its meaning when, by theurgic operations, they thought to move the gods to fuller revelations of their secrets, and render their glorious presence visible to the consciousness of their devotees. And out of the corruption of this inestimably precious possession came the magicians of the Pentateuch, Simon Magus, and the later sorcerers of the East, with all the jugglery and chicanery of the schools of magic which their perversity founded. 'Their name is legion, for they are many.'

"These historical facts, which I have briefly referred to, are often quoted by the adversaries of our claims against us. Tennyson once wrote:

'A lie that is all a lie,

May be met and fought with outright;

But a lie that is half a truth,

Is always the hardest to fight.'

"Not," said the lecturer, smiling, "that a lie can ever be so compounded—it is only seeming; and the truth which the Christian Scientist has espoused, like all other truths, stands impregnable against the assaults of wicked persecution."

Although Francis Bartlett had been listening closely, he had also, like Herbert Pocket, been "looking about him."

Up near the platform was a select circle, or coterie, of the initiated and believing; also

those who were but learners of the new doctrine.

He saw long-haired men nod approvingly, and both serious-faced and flippant-looking women take out their note-books and gold pencils, with heads of jasper or malachite, to jot down notes from time to time.

"A rattling good talker, is n't she?" asked a dude at his elbow, as he fixed his eye-glass at a more convenient angle for a steady stare.

Francis Bartlett turned wrathfully in his direction, to discover that the question had not been addressed to him.

Disgusted with himself, the circumstances yes, and with Sadie—he began to shoulder his way through the press of people behind him, in order to leave the place; but, as he did so, he heard distinctly the reply of the dude's companion:

"You bet; and she's got the tin."

CHAPTER II.

hereached the street he felt very hot and disagreeable. He took a large handkerchief from the inside pocket of his coat, and hurriedly wiped his face and forehead, removing the soft traveling hat he had been wearing, as he did so, and baring his head to the cool night air.

The heavens were deeply blue and full of stars. Orion seemed to be more aggressively visible than usual.

"What a crowd a little town like this can turn out to hear a pretty woman lecture!" thought he.

"You bet; and she's got the tin," seemed to come mockingly to his ears.

"I wish she had n't," muttered he. "If she had been poor enough to be compelled to do something real and true! If she only had had to struggle a little to live; not too much—that chills and crushes hope, and discourages and breaks the heart—women were never meant for it. Man's curse was to labor, and earn his bread in the sweat of his brow; but woman's place is 'the sweet, safe corner by

the household fire, behind the heads of children.' Only enough—just enough work to bring out what is finest, best, and truest in her!"

He did not say all this in approved melodramatic style. He only thought the greater part of it as he went slowly along past the dusky, fragrant front yards, sweet with summer flowers. And he further thought that Sadie, by right, might expect to marry a man with a fortune equal to her own. A sigh followed this thought. "Although," the inward voice went on, "a right sort of fellow would n't want a wife imbued with that kind of philosophy. I think I will try to convert her from it before he comes. I said she did n't know any more about those things than a kitten! A man can't tell what a cultivated woman knows. Her insight is so keen she learns from everything. While man masters an alphabet, she appropriates the sciences to which it is the key. But Christian Science! That's a misnomer. She's subtle, though; good at reasoning; a fine logician. Better than I was when I made my maiden plea-or am now, for that matter, perhaps! Was it an eve Browning called 'blue as Astarte's?' her eye is blue enough, and—so am I!"

Next morning, Francis Bartlett came down to breakfast at what he considered an early hour. In times past such an hour had discovered his Cousin Sadie in bed, fast asleep; and it had been considerably later in the forenoon before she appeared in the dining-room, in her picturesque morning dress of flowered China silk, or a loose red merino, with its graceful little train and negligé effect, which she called a tea-gown.

On this occasion she was there before him, in a severely plain costume of very dark blue, buttoned to the throat like an officer's uniform, and showing her slight but not angular figure to advantage.

She came forward, and gave him her hand with an effusiveness of welcome a little overdone—a precipitancy, which seemed to say: "If 't were done, when 't is done, 't were well it were done quickly."

It appeared to Mrs. Bartlett, looking on from the head of the table, as if Sadie might have dreaded this first greeting, and desired to have it over as soon as possible. Truly, many things had happened since these young people had last met.

"Why, Francis, how well you look! Why didn't you let us know you were coming?"

"I ought to have done so; by failing to do it, I missed a part of my welcome home."

A little color came into her face; it was not a blush, but just such a tinge of red as is often called up by the inward tenacity and force of purpose with which one's will rallies to the support of a stimulating resolution supposed to be menaced from without.

"I had an engagement. I am often engaged, now, in the evenings. Sit down; the coffee will be cold. Perhaps Aunt Harriet may have told you that I—" the blonde head raised itself a trifle defiantly on the firm, white neck supporting it—" am delivering a course of lectures."

"Ye—es," drawled he, a little absently, sitting down at his mother's right hand. "Two lumps, mother! I've taken on the habit of using one more since I went away. Didn't always get milk in camp. And are you well—Sarah?"

The color now on Miss Spencer's face was like that with which the costumer in the play makes up the heroine's complexion; there was considerable of it, and it was well diffused.

It was the first time in his life he had ever called her by that title, and the sound of it was not so pleasing as it had seemed to her from other friends and acquaintances. Still, Sadie was a very childish prænomen for a serious young woman to be known by, and she said to herself it was very well that Francis had taken the initiative, without her having had to instruct him.

"Never better," said she, a little constrainedly.

"You look odd, somehow; what's the matter? O, to be sure! You have on a street dress. What have you done with that pink affair, with the front all a riot of roses—La France, and Jacques, and Perle de—what is it?"

She laughed: "How observing and accurate individuals of your sex always are in describing women's gowns! I'm in street dress because I go out mornings to—to treat my patients."

Mr. Bartlett coughed, and became ominously silent. His brows contracted, and the two vertical lines between them came into prominence. The lawyer on the other side of the case always knew that 'Bartlett was warming to his work' when he saw that sign appear.

"I should have thought," began he, and she straightened her spine for the expected onslaught, when suddenly the tinkle of a bell was heard from somewhere in the upper regions of the house. Miss Spencer jumped up, and threw down her napkin. "Excuse me, please," said she, and walked out of the room. Frank got upon his feet, also, and looked inquiringly at his mother.

"It's her telephone-bell," explained she. "She has put telephones, at her own expense, into more than half a dozen houses of people she professes to 'treat.' Listen!"

The doors and windows were open throughout the house, and presently, like a hail to a ship in the offing, he heard the high, strained call, as of a voice on stilts, shoot its unsteady silvery salute into the transmitter—"Hello!"

"She would better lower her voice a little; they'd hear her more distinctly. People have an idea that telephones are deaf. Well, ma mere, how long has this tomfoolery been going on?"

"A couple of months, or such a matter. I knew you wouldn't like it; but she laid the whole matter before me in the start, and told me she would abide by my decision. Could she have the liberty of the house in carrying on this work, or would it annoy me? She said she could get Mr. Patchett's cottage, and Miss Jane York for a chaperon, if I thought it would be disagreeable to have her and her tel-

ephone, and at times, perhaps, her patients here. So, what could I do? I knew it would not look well to have her leave us in that fashion. Her friends would have called it religious persecution on our part, and those who don't believe in it would have said she was a crank; and she would have been spied upon and slandered, perhaps. I knew, too, she was under your guardianship—"

"Yes, yes; I understand—and many other reasons. As to the guardianship, you know it does n't extend to anything but her property since she came of age. Her father was wise, though, to give her only the income until she is twenty-five. She seems to be dispensing that with a liberal hand, however, as regards telephones. But you were right, quite right, in not letting her go to Patchett's. Is that nephew of his here this summer?"

"Mr. Langdon? Well—rather. He brought the doctor home last evening. Didn't you hear them talking over the gate?"

Francis Bartlett turned toward the window, thoughtfully pulling his heavy, tawny mustache, and neglected to answer his mother's question. As she looked after him, a sly, swift, satisfied smile passed across her lips, and she shrugged her shoulders complacently.

CHAPTER III.

R. BARTLETT went down to his office, and "buckled down," as he called it, to the examination of piles of briefs, contracts, and a mélange of other papers which had accumulated during his absence. He held an extended séance with his junior partner, and made a mighty feint of rushing once more into the full-flowing tide of his erstwhile interrupted business affairs.

But, somehow or other, he felt like Saul when the witch of Endor had brought up Samuel—the spirit had gone out of him.

His home-coming had been robbed of the pleasure which he had anticipated while away. He saw no prospect, now, that matters were at all likely to drift back into the old trend. There appeared no promise of renewing the former pastimes, which, in winter, were the lecture, concert, or the new book to be read and discussed in company with Sadie, under the shaded light of the sitting-room lamp; or, now and then, an entire evening at the piano, trying new selections, or growing dreamy and happy over the recital of old ones. In sum-

mer there was boating, an occasional horseback ride, or evenings when Sadie swung lazily in the hammock under the trees, and he, sitting near, watched the stars and the fire-flies and the slender figure, looking half like a ghost, as its white draperies shone out of the dusky gloom.

At such times he had been reconciled even to the chaperonage of his mother, as she sat at a discreet distance in a rocking-chair, which creaked as it rocked, wearing a three-cornered white affair over her head that looked like a tidy, and holding a Japanese fan, with which she busied herself in fighting off the mosquitoes. Somehow he had been so foolishly happy in listening to Sadie's piquant prattle, with its undertone of wistful gravity. He had thought her deference to his larger wisdom so appealing. Her follies had been so harmless and pretty they had almost taken the guise of virtues; and she had been so full of sparkling fancies that she was like a brilliant with many faces, all of which take the light and throw it back in a dazzle of radiance. He would have proposed marriage to Sadie long ere this, if it had not been for her money.

Francis Bartlett had an assertive sentiment that the man was the head of the woman, and that for a wife to possess so patent an advantage over her husband as to be the moneyed partner in the matrimonial alliance, was something not at all to be desired.

He did not feel certain that Sadie would have accepted him under any circumstances, however; but, up to the time of his going away, the present had been quite pleasant enough, without attempting to forecast the future too accurately.

He had not invited Sadie to correspond with him for the reason that he feared to commit himself, in so intimate a correspondence as that might have become, to something which his judgment would afterward condemn. So, regretfully, he had held in abeyance this friendship, with its tendency on his part to ripen into something warmer, during the six months of his absence.

He had thought to return and find all things as they had been hitherto; to surrender himself, in spite of the dissenting voice of prudence, to the fascinating delights of—home, he called it. But, in spite of the fact that this young man thought his mother something quite unique in the maternal line, "home" meant to his appreciative perceptions, two-thirds Sadie and one "ma mere."

All things else were "as they had been;" but an unexpected and overwhelming cataclysm seemed to have swept Sadie suddenly and completely away from him.

He had at first been astonished, then amused, then indignant, at the turn affairs had taken.

All these varying states and conditions of feeling had alternately been uppermost before he stood in the doorway of the G. A. R. Hall, and listened to an infinitesimal portion of Sadie's lecture. The prevailing state of mind which followed upon this, was that of profound perplexity.

It would not greatly have surprised him if, under certain circumstances, with environments to foster it, this bright, sparkling creature had developed into a butterfly; but a religieuse, and an austere and mystical one at that!

Nothing suits men better than to have the women they admire filled with tender Christian aspirations, which serve to round and complete and crown, with idealistic touch, their otherwise already beautiful human characters.

Men of no decided religious views of their own, and men with decidedly antagonistic views, for the regulation of their own lives and conduct, are well agreed that it behooves women to be good. And if such women belong to them by ties of blood, or the closer ties of the heart, they are often inclined, even in the midst of ridicule or satire upon Christians in general, to plume themselves upon the superior Christianity of these in particular. As if, somehow, it formed an ægis of protection for them likewise; and, like all the other virtues of their women-kind, was supererogatory in its nature—the excess, over and above, being imputed to them!

To have found that Sadie had "embraced religion" in the normal way, become a member of the Church they had both been brought up to attend, and of which he himself was a well-paying, if not a highly or deeply spiritual member, would have suited his conceptions of what was right, desirable, and proper. But this phantasm, this will-o'-the-wisp, this—er—"fly-up-the-creek" (a peculiar bird, so known in the homely nomenclature of the country, coming into his mind), was altogether a different matter.

Sadie taking herself seriously was, in itself, a surprise. But the surprise widened and deepened as it became, from day to day, more fully impressed upon him that she was taking her self-imposed mission to minister to a sick and suffering clientelage, very seriously as well.

How a girl of twenty-three, who had had but the ordinary school-training in physiology and hygiene, and promptly forgotten the major part of it without doubt, could have the assurance to attempt to cure people of fevers, consumption, cancers, and the like, was something beyond his comprehension.

He propounded this question to his mother—how could such a thing be?

Mrs. Bartlett laughed at him gaily, and shook her head.

"When you speak of her aptitude as a healer in connection with a knowledge of physiology, and anything else so gross and unreal as a human body, you display your ignorance most lamentably. She gets a spiritual or mental 'illumination' as to what is the matter with the seeming body of the patient, and another as to the remedial means to be applied in the case.

"Hygienic precautions are considered culpable follies, if not actual sins, because they concede the existence of evil, through the endeavor to avoid it. Sanitary advocates are an aggravated type of evil-doers. You have only to imagine the air off the muck or garbage heap festering in the sun, or a volume of sewer-gas, pure and salubrious, and it will brace the respiratory organs like the balmy breath of balsamic odors. Jenner's discovery is to Sadie and her school an enemy to human progress; Pasteur's career is disgusting and horrible to contemplate; and they turn from Koch's lymph of tuberculous germs in a holy horror too deep for words. They believe in and admit the origin and progress of no disease independent of mental belief, and discard every remedy which lies outside of it."

"But what of those insidious diseases that begin and make progress long before the detective nerves of sensation have made their tardy report? The slow-growing tumors and cancers, or the sudden amaurosis or other paralysis, instantaneously developing from antecedent causes not before apprehended?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "Somebody else's mind—somebody else's! When Cain, in his rustic cradle, had the world's first case of colic, it must clearly have been attributable to Adam and Eve. They had never heard or known of colic, it is true; but is it not highly probable that their minds may have conjec-

tured a possible state of potential, obvious evil, resulting in the seeming disturbance of apparent gastric conditions?"

"O, exceedingly!" said he, laughing. "But, jesting aside, this seems horrible to me. I can't understand how a true, good, honest girl, such as Sadie always was, can lend herself to such a mockery and mummery as this evidently is—such an unblushing cheat!"

"Be quiet, dear. Don't say such hard things. Sadie is true and honest still. She is a dupe, herself. She has listened to a siren's song. This, which is neither a religion nor yet a science, but professing to be both, comes in the name of Christ (to which, of course, it has no right, I know), promising to do away with all the evils flesh is heir to-even death, itself; and it has appealed to her highly imaginative mind with a great deal of force. She means well. She thinks she is doing good, and she has a sort of æsthetic enjoyment in this abandonment of realism, that she takes to be spirituality. Frank, I wish you would go about combating this fad-if it may be called that, being so much more dangerous-in the right way. Study it, and show her its fallacies, beginning, of course, with the proof that it is n't Christian, at all. She leaves her books around all over the house—read them. It's a pity, I think, if Francis Bartlett, E-squire, as Nora's young man insists on calling you, can not down her arguments,"

"Look here, mother," called he cautiously; "that looks as if the attraction might be mutual," (directing her attention to the window.)

Mrs. Bartlett did look, and a frown came over her pleasant, placid forehead.

Mr. Langdon and Miss Spencer were coming along the plank sidewalk, upon which the front yard looked, together. She was in her dark-blue gown, and wore a flaring, widebrimmed hat of coarse blue straw, trimmed with bunches of ribbon, darker still.

She held in one hand a large sun-umbrella, and in the other a deep-red rose, which her companion had evidently just given her, for she was pressing it to her dainty nose, and exclaiming rapturously: "How sweet! How delicious! I am so fond of roses!"

Mr. Langdon felt tempted to say to her:

"Why are you fond of them? They have no color, no form, no perfume. They are simply an idea that you and I and the world in general have in common. They do not exist, you know, per se." But he did not say

it, for two reasons. One was that he loved her—the other, that he desired to make her love him; and something seemed to tell him that that way danger lay.

So, being wise as a serpent in that regard, he strove, also, to be harmless as a dove. He said: "Delicious, indeed!" and looked at her. And, greatly to her disgust and fiery indignation with herself, she began to blush, and turned her head away.

They came up to the gate, both of them looking conscious and feeling certain that Francis Bartlett, sitting so composedly by the window, reading his *World*, had seen and put his own interpretation upon this little *contretemps*.

She leaned upon the gate for a few moments, and talked. It was because she dreaded to go in; but neither the man on the sidewalk nor the one behind the paper knew this. The latter, thus shielded, looked at his rival from a coign of vantage.

He saw a lithe, elegant figure, courtly and graceful; a handsome Southern face, with clear, olive complexion and dark eyes; a proud, sensitive mouth, with a drooping mustache such as has gifted more than one hero of romance, and many a rascally scamp in real life, with

the melancholy charm so difficult for impressionable youth and beauty to resist.

"He has n't a great deal of body," growled Francis Bartlett, from behind the paper.

"Body!" said Mrs. Bartlett, spiritedly; "that's exactly what he doesn't need, you know, to make his way with Sarah Katherine. She may conclude to marry him, as Dorothy, in 'Middlemarch,' did Mr. Casaubon, for 'his beautiful soul.'

Francis gave his mother an annihilating look, and strode out of the room.

Снартев IV.

WEEK passed away, very much after this same fashion. Francis Bartlett and Sarah Spencer dwelt under the same roof, but the old days of companionship and confidence seemed forever to be over.

When he came in, she was always out, or reading books on this new theology in her room, or responding, "Hello! hello!" over her telephone, to the calls of those whom she spoke of grandiloquently as her "people."

Once, during that time, Judge Blimber, a wealthy widower of about a year's standing, and not at all bad to look at, had driven up with his elegant carriage and span, for Miss Spencer to fulfill an engagement to drive with him.

Francis was sitting in the parlor at the time—just after an early tea—but the judge could not leave his restive team, and did not go in, waiting outside for the lady hastily donning her hat and gloves up-stairs.

Francis measured the judge with a new rule this time. He had known him as a successful lawyer, afterward awarded judicial honors; but had never considered him as a lady's man. He had thought of him as an "old duffer;" but in point of fact the judge was not above forty, with a pleasing manner, and a practical capacity for piling up money.

The hand which he gracefully extended to assist Miss Spencer to a seat, when she made her appearance, was most exquisitely gloved. He wore a high silk hat, with a weed the depth of its crown.

As they drove away, the young man thought to himself that the late Mrs. Blimber would hardly have been satisfied with that "weed," if she could have seen the air and smile with which her aforetime husband laid an exquisite bunch of roses upon his companion's lap.

In truth, Francis was not satisfied with it himself, but became a little more reconciled as he glanced toward the other side of the street, and saw passing by his late bête noire from the sunny South, who looked quite as disconsolate as he felt.

"Sadie's admirers all seem to have tumbled to the preference for roses," thought he; and then, a little ashamed of the coarse form his thought had taken, he covered it up with a line of Tennyson's:

[&]quot;And the soul of the rose went into my blood."

Just then, Nora, with the privileged air of semi-rural servants, put her head in at the door, saying:

"The likes of men! They easy forget them that's gone. But I do n't know as better could be expected, when you consider that every girl in this town is greasin' her shoes to run after him, and poor Mis's Blimber's only been in her grave a year come this fourth of July. I was saying that same to Mr. Dempsey yesterday, and what do you think he said?"

"That he would n't be that kind of a widower when his Nora mavourneen 'under the willows was sleeping!"

"O, Mr. Francis! I did n't think you'd make fun of a poor girl! He said he 'reckoned the judge thought she's as dead as she ever would be.'"

And then Nora looked sharply at the lawyer, to take note of his appreciation of her young man's 'cuteness.

He threw back his head, and laughed outright—a genuine, merry, heart-whole laugh.

"And he had the right of it," said he, his merriment subsiding. "But is Miss Spencer one of those who has been 'greasin' her shoes?"" "Not she! The women that come here seem to think she's a complete saint; but, I tell you, she looked as human as what they are when she put on her hat to-night, saying that she 'could n't get out of it this time; but there was one sure thing about it, that this would be the last time.'"

At this, Mr. Bartlett's spirits rose like mercury in a thermometer on a hot summer day.

He forgot all about George Langdon, and he might have gone so far as to kiss Nora for the disposal of one rival at least, had it not been that he possessed too chivalrous a spirit to take undue liberties with a girl because her social position was inferior to his own.

But, although Judge Blimber's promised congé kept Mr. Bartlett tolerably comfortable over night, the sober second thought of the ensuing day made it very clear to his consciousness that, no matter how many of those who pretended to the hand of his second cousin might meet with short shrift from it, it did not in any wise alter his own relation toward her.

And yet what had he to complain of? He had never made it evident to Sadie that he cared for her as a lover. He, it appeared, had

desired to play the rôle of "cousin," and be a dog in the manger. Somehow, even now, the knowledge of her bonds and stocks, first mortgages, etc., was just as difficult to get over, and as subversive to the idea of their establishing a conjugal firm as ever; although, if Sadie had a fellow-feeling to that which he experienced for her, and he was very sure of it, why—everybody has to sacrifice some opinions to the behests of the heart!

When he had arrived at this sapient conclusion, he threw down his pen and banged the covers of his open book in so vindictive a manner that the clerk reading "Campbell on Equity" looked up in surprise and consternation.

"I'm going out for the day," said he. "If Croft calls for that paper, it's in this lower pigeon-hole in the right-hand corner; and you may tell Mrs. Weeks, if she happens in, that I'm giving that matter of hers due attention."

Then he slammed the door, only to open it again immediately to remark that "nobody need come to the house after him, as he was going out of town."

He met Judge Blimber just outside the court-house, and was pleased to observe that he was not smiling, and, if anything, looked a

little sour. He went home and hunted up his rod and fishing-line, a box of hooks, and some gorgeous red and yellow flies.

Nobody was there but Nora, who respectfully tried to persuade him to delay his departure until after dinner, as there was to be a strawberry short-cake. She did not succeed; but they compromised the matter by her wrapping up some beef sandwiches and pickles and a hard-boiled egg in one of his mother's finest napkins, bordered with drawn-work.

"And if you want me to keep on staying here, Mr. Francis, do you be sure to bring back that napkin," said she.

"Which same I do; and it shall come back again."

Then he shouldered his tackle and was off, with the sandwiches in his pocket.

When he arrived at the objective point of his pedestrian tour, he found that he was considerably heated, and, throwing off his hat, lay down in the shade on the bank of the stream to cool off.

"What a fool I am!" quoth he, "rushing off and leaving my business in this way!"

There was nobody to dispute this proposision, so he let it stand.

Then when he had cooled off, it was so

quiet and deliciously secluded, and a yellow-vested bumble-bee was droning in so restful a monotone among the fennel-weeds that grew thickly around him, he concluded that "forty winks" would do him as much good as it did the Fat Boy in "Pickwick," and resigned himself to a quiet little nap—all of which was the very reverse of romantic, or the sequel to be expected of an impetuous man whose worries of mind over a fair maiden had made him temporarily incompetent for the consideration of complicated legal affairs.

Perhaps he realized this when he awoke. At least, he shrugged his shoulders, with the remark that "human nature was queer material," and proceeded to discuss Nora's lunch, after which he pocketed the napkin, to make sure it wouldn't get away.

Then he sat up, tilted his hat over his eyes, and turned his attention to the finny population in the waters before him. The stream was a beautiful, meandering ribbon of silver, with a musical-sounding Indian name; but the people who lived in the town and adjacent country spoke of it only as "the crick."

CHAPTER V.

HERE is a natural vein of cruelty in man.

So Scratch the civilized gentleman and you

find the barbarian.

Francis Bartlett became wonderfully absorbed in his occupation. He forgot, for the nonce, all about Sadie and Langdon, and the vexing questions of which they were the subjects.

Casting his line, he sat looking down into the pellucid water, so clear that its gravelly bed, strewn with pebbles, seemed clarified and magnified, as something looked at through a microscopic lens. How smoothly the silverskinned denizens of this liquid under-world slipped through its vital element! It reminded him of Andersen's fairy-tale about the "Little Mermaid," which was one of the favorite stories of the hobbledehoy period of his life—a time when most boys have outgrown the magic charms of elf-lore, and are wild for adventures and the sea. But he had admired it for its poetry and imagery; it touched his sympathy with its strain of yearning and lesson of heroic, unappreciated sacrifice.

Did they feel and think—these creatures—as the little mermaid did? And suffer? Then there was a jerk, and the line tightened. A struggle in the water, a glint of sunlight on the silver scales, and the poetry and imagery and sympathy with the under-world life was instantaneously dispelled.

He was conscious, just then, of nothing beyond the proud fact of having landed his prey. And he straightway secured it, and left it to die, regardless of the question of its sufferings.

Again and again came the jerk and the taut line, and the string of his trophies was lengthening apace, when, casually looking up the stream, he beheld a pleasing sight.

It was not a royal barge, like that in which Antony first beheld Cleopatra, with purple sails and "poop of beaten gold." It was only a boat, a little boat that the old man below the bridge often rented to pleasure-seekers going upon the water. It was too far off for him to read its name, but he knew its shape and color, and just where "The Pansy" was painted on its strakes in golden letters.

In the exact center of the boat, in the middle of the thwart which crossed it, was a solitary oarswoman. No dawdling voluptuary, but a lithe, light, erect figure, full of vigorous

strength, sending the row-boat forward with the strokes of her own oars.

He was certain it was Sadie, by her general air and carriage, and the pose of her head as it leaned forward, while she stretched the oar to the limit of the stopper. He, himself, had taught her the technicalities of rowing, and prided himself on the proficiency of his pupil. Then, as she came nearer, he caught a dazzling impression of color from her white blouse, blue skirt, and the vivid red silk handkerchief knotted about her throat, to protect the back of her neck from sunburn.

She wore a white sailor-hat, banded about by a white ribbon, and set well back upon her head, giving her a piquant and jaunty air, and intensifying the youthfulness of her appearance.

Miss Spencer, upon her part, had caught sight of Mr. Bartlett over her shoulder, only a short time after he had detected her approach, and gave a start as she recognized him.

How well she knew his form and air and style! That was the easy-fitting, careless sack coat he sometimes wore about the house and on his rural tramps, when the vagabondish spirit, of which some men possess more than others, and of which he had a goodly share,

came uppermost. The very way in which his handkerchief was thrust into its outside upper pocket, was instinct with his individuality.

What broad, square, masculine shoulders, that transformed the old flaunel coat, as it hung over them, into a thing of beauty! His straw hat was tip-tilted over his eyes.

"Poor fellow!" aspirated she. "He appears dejected!" Then, bethinking herself, she added: "I am glad of it; he ought to be." "How shall I pass him?" reflected she. "He is a lion in the way. Shall I go on, with a stiff bow, or halt and make some careless remark, just to show I don't care for the way he has acted? Or, shall I look straight into space, and pretend not to see him at all?"

And when she had about concluded to pursue the latter course, he put both hands to his mouth, like a speaking-trumpet, and called out:

"Hello! Hello!"

This she took to be a reflection upon her telephone, and looked in another direction.

"Alloy! Alloy! Friend, alloy!"

"What impudence! He would wake the 'seven sleepers!" I shall have to look." But her rigid neck had not yet turned in his direction when he cried out:

"Sadie! Sadie! Come alongside."

"O, is it you, Francis?"

"Please come alongside. I want to speak to you?"

"Anything important?"

"Very important, to me."

"If some other time will do as well, I am going two or three miles further down the stream."

She turned the bow in his direction, and in a moment or two more the boat sat rocking on the water in front of him.

"Where are you going, Sadie?"

She hesitated a moment, then, with a little constraint in her air, replied:

"I am taking some things to a family down near the Aldershot farm. They are down on their luck, and this is a relief expedition."

"Pick me up, and let me go along. Fancy me a castaway, and relieve me from existence on a desert island."

She hesitated. She felt, instinctively, that Francis Bartlett, to use a homely phrase, had a "rod in pickle" for her; and ever since his return she had avoided being alone with him, lest, like the sword of Damocles, it should descend upon her. But there seemed, now, no escape for her, without the display of downright incivility.

"I will contribute," suggested he, insinuatingly, holding up his string of fish.

"But—I don't believe you know them," she began.

"Well, if I do n't, I am very easy to get acquainted with. There is a great deal of—what do you call it?—affinité de génie in my make up. Who are they?"

"Their name is Eppert."

"Eppert?—Joe Eppert? That's rather rich, my not knowing Joe Eppert! I suspect he'd have gone to the work-house, or over the road, and been working out a sentence, before this, if I had n't known him. I've gotten him out of some tough scrapes."

"I thought he was only poor, and—and sick."

"Sick, is he?"

"Why it—well, yes—that is—"

"Well, if Joe's sick, why, of course, I must go and see him. Hold her to the shore, Sadie; I do n't like wet feet. We'll pick up the bamboo as we come back."

With this, he threw down his rod, and stepped carefully into the boat.

"Change seats!" said he, in a masterful way, such as women gloat over in manly men,

yet, nevertheless, always feel bound to resent. He saw the dawning resistance in her face.

"I can pull a better oar than you. I studied Greek at college, you know; and I don't catch so many crabs."

"Crabs, indeed!" said she, scornfully, but obeying, and surrendering her place. Then a sharp inflection came into her voice, as he pulled away: "Look where you are going, College Greek!"

He pulled to one side, just in time to avoid grazing the shore of a little island to their right.

Then, finding himself in so unexpectedly pleasant a situation, out in a boat on a summer stream with Sadie, with Langdon and the Judge left safely behind, he felt so jubilant that he burst into a stave of an old Scotch boating song, written by Sir Walter himself, beginning:

"Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands! Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green pine!"

The air was an improvisation, composed of a conglomeration of selections from sundry and various melodies with which he was familiar; but his voice was good, and the strain was not without music; especially where, at the end, it vaulted into a high, clear tenor on the call: "Ho!—iero!" When he repeated it a second time, Sadie had caught the refrain, and struck in with a well-modulated contralto; and their blended voices sent the "Ho!—iero!" in a strong, sweet chorus, echoing far over the quiet waters.

"This is what the French would call joli. This seems like the old times and the summers gone by. I don't like the changes that have come about in our camaraderie."

Miss Spencer dropped her eyes, and was discreetly silent. Her eyes were, indeed, "blue as Astarte's;" not violet, but blue, with just that subtle greenish hint that is often observed in the blue eyes of people who think.

There had been a time when she had thought more about Francis Bartlett than had been good for her peace of mind; but she had taken herself well in hand, and resolved to profit by Shakspeare's advice, and "keep in the rear of her affections."

She certainly thought he could have but little to complain of, if what he never wished or asked for should be diverted in another direction.

When, however, he reiterated, "I don't like it," she looked up quietly, and said:

"Some one has aptly written: 'No summer

ever came back; and no two summers were ever alike. Times change, and people change; and if our hearts do not change as readily, so much the worse for us.'"

"H'm! I never was one of those whose friendships 'cast off their bright skins yearly, like the snake.' I like to see you in those pretty colors. They are so much more effective than that ugly blue, that makes you look like a grenadier."

"I thought you were above such frivolities. Earnest women can not spend their lives in the passive display of shades and tints. Life is a serious business, and subdued colors best suit its moil and turnoil."

"I do n't consider beauty frivolous. And as to that, if blue is more religious and serious than red, the sunbeam and the rainbow should be disintegrated, and their red and yellow taken out. I like earnestness, when it proceeds from life's lessons, but I do n't like it taken up as a fad or a mission. It becomes too aggressive and offensive. You are too young to go to dressing yourself like a sister of charity. Stick to the bright emblems of youth and enthusiasm and courage. You will lose heart and hope soon enough. There is a long stretch—prosy midday and sober

afternoon—between now and night, when your serious colors will be more in place and harmony. There will be 'the burden and the heat,' and

'The glimmer of twilight;
Never glad, confident morning again.'"

Sadie was touched, in spite of herself, but she would not show it.

"How do you know those things? You talk like a book, and people who talk in that fashion we call prigs."

"I'm not a prig; only a prophet."

"Men seem to think that woman's sole excuse for being is to look, act, and dress to please them."

"Certainly. I believe with Napoleon that woman was made for man; man for himself, his country, and glory."

"I half believe you mean it. I wonder you don't go so far as to indorse Confucius's doctrine, that women have no souls."

"No, not so bad as that, Sarah. I am perfectly willing to admit that they have souls, if you, on the other hand, will let them have bodies!"

CHAPTER VI.

HERE was a moment's pause, such as usually follows the entrance of a couple of combatants within the space of the arena.

Miss Spencer would fain have avoided the contest, but it was bound to come; and she braced herself to meet the attack, and if possible, overcome her antagonist.

"Well," said she, slowly, "admitting, for the sake of argument, that they have, does it follow that life's aims and aspirations should be kept entirely on the level of bodily needs? Should all ideality and spirituality be excluded?"

"I do not object to ideality as an inspiration for the development of a principle based upon a stable foundation, nor to spirituality which spiritualizes, uplifts, and refines; but nothing which is a mere idealism, built on a rotten basis, founded on falsehood, has any right to exist."

She became a trifle paler, but her voice was quite steady as she said:

"An instance, please!"

"Well, Sadie, you must not be angry, or think I am personal in what I say. My observations are intended for application, not to you particularly, but to the hybrid organization with which you have become entangled. The ideality and spirituality of 'Christian Science,' so-called, is built from the beginning upon an imposture and falsehood."

"I do not altogether grasp your meaning." "I will try to make it clear. The Christian scientists are careful to try to impress upon us the similarity of their cures to the miraculous ones of Christ and his disciples; they do not discredit those former cures—even recount them. Some of the converts to your doctrine are professing Christians and members of Churches; but do they, or do you, consider that your creed has no relation to the New Testament doctrines of the incarnation, atonement, and resurrection? None, in fact, to the Old Testament, with its doctrine of monotheism and history of the creation? None to any revealed religion believed in by any body of people with whom the Bible, or what is recorded in it, has anything special to do, whether they be Jew or Gentile? All God! It is Pantheism. It is Buddhism. It is in no sense or particular Christian. One

only needs to dip, here and there, into the pages of your scriptures to determine this fact. In them, Christ, like all the rest of us, is denied a personal existence in the flesh. Does not the 'Platform' of your sect, laid broadly down in 'Science and Health,' Vol. II-O, you see a lawyer must have a tenacious memory, and retain facts as they are!-say that 'God is supreme, the only life, substance, and intelligence of the universe and man;' that 'if a portion of the Infinite could enter limits, that portion would lose the nature of Deity?' Tell me, now, isn't that sweeping away the world's Redeemer, the Christian's Savior, the impregnable Rock upon which the entire Christian system is built, with the besom of destruction?

"You slay Christ, you crucify him as cruelly and unquestionably as did his enemies of old, and then try to masquerade in the seamless garment for which you cast lots at the foot of the cross. You deny him—he is not in your entire theology—the Christ of the Bible; and yet you would put on the robe of revered respectability with which his religion is almost everywhere received to-day, and, in it, deceive the world as to your claims to Christian consideration, while you climb up some other way, to enter in as a thief and a robber."

She put up her hand to stay the impetuous torrent of his words. "Listen!" she said. "Hear what one of our writers has said on that subject: 'He was the son of God; and what does it mean to be the son of God? God is good—hence good is God. So good was the creator of everything; so good was, is, and will be the Heavenly Father of all his creations."

He looked at her wonderingly for a moment, and then burst into a scoffing laugh.

"How lucid a definition! How consoling, how full of comfort to the lost and doubting soul, sick of its miseries and its sins, seeking where He may be found who is the express image of the Father—looking for the proof that he was miraculously born to save it from its sins!

"You claim, I believe, that God being good, it would have been contrary to all laws for him to have produced anything unlike himself. According to that, all men are equally, and in the same sense, the sons of God. The only difference seems to be that the rest of them sinned, and 'came short of his glory.' How happens it, then, if there is 'no evil,'

^{* &}quot;Mind-healing,"-Kate Taylor.

that they ever sinned, or, that this other creation-Christ-who was, in no different sense, his son, did not sin likewise? And if all human creatures are but mere emanations from God, who 'is the only life, substance, and intelligence of the universe,' how comes it that these emanations from a being all-good are from earliest childhood and infancy prone to evil? That you can scarcely begin early enough in life with Christian teaching to avoid the necessity of being obliged to overthrow and subvert evil ideas and practices? One would expect, if the human soul is a direct emanation from Him, to find it, when but a short time released from contact with his great personality, strong in his might, dimpled with his touch, pure with his supreme purity."

"Are not children innocent?"

"Yes, while incapable, through ignorance and physical disability, of being sinful. I don't know how it was with you, but one of the first things I remember concerning myself was of doing something I ought not to have done. No; I'll amend that statement: The first thing I remember was the desire to do wrong, which preceded the act.

"Tell me, Sadie, do you never feel afraid that your Christ, being different from the rest of mankind only in degree, not kind, may, after all, not have been what you think he was? If Christ's mighty works can be duplicated by you, to-day, so full of ignorance, faults, errors, sins, as you are, and as all human creatures are, how do those works attest his purity or his power? He but shared in the common gift of God to man. How can you be sure, even, knowing what you do of humanity in its present stage, and in that stage when he was here among men, that he differed even in degree; that he was not a great impostor? Nothing could be more probable than this, if your 'platform' states a fundamental truth of your doctrine. I refer to that passage which declares that 'if the infinite could enter limits, that portion would lose the nature of Deity.' So you see, by your own reasoning, or, rather that to which you subscribe, that our Savior the Word that was made flesh, that was originally with God, and that was God-can not, under any rational construction be made to do duty for the Christ of Christian Science."

She fidgeted in her seat a moment, then replied:

"'Made flesh!' We hold, as you well know, that the flesh is a 'very evident seeming,' and the Bible, itself, tells us that he came in 'the likeness of sinful flesh.' As you are aware, the Bible is an Oriental work, often dealing in hyperboles of expression, by means of which a seeming might very easily be confounded with a being, in figures of speech."

"But, how could he be in the likeness of what did not exist? The Scripture hyperboles are used in the poetical comparisons of the Bible; never in its history. God is recorded as having made a personal man out of the dust of the earth. Through what gradations, we can only judge. He did not throw off an emanation to be again absorbed into himself. He made a personal man; and I may believe it and like it, or I may disbelieve it and dislike it, but the Bible says that this soul breathed into man is to be disposed of, finally, according to man's conduct. If it is in accordance with God's law and Christ's teaching, it (a separate, individual soul) will go where God is. If not, this devil you deny will take charge of it. So, you will observe, that neither the inception, trend, nor outcome of your theology is Christian. If man is but an emanation from God, and God can not be confined in a human body, and there is no human body anyhow to be confined in, man does not exist, and can not be held accountable. And

Christianity teaches that he does exist, and is accountable. You must admit there is a 'very evident seeming.'"

"The Scriptures somewhere say that 'God is, and is to be, All in all.'"

"Meaning that he is and ever will be Absolute Ruler over all, and furnishes the 'persistent force,' sustaining all, that the Agnostics talk about. Flora Hollister lent me one of her books the other day—Flora wants to convert me—and I found that the definition of Adam was 'error, falsity, the belief in original sin, sickness, and death,' and a great deal more to the same effect. Now if that was what Adam was, what caused Eve to believe he was a personal man? She, at least, had none of the influence of the thoughts of those around her, bearing upon her mind and coloring its opinions, nor yet that of preceding generations."

"But does not the subsequent history of the race prove that that is just what Adam was?" asked she, triumphantly.

"Not if, as you say, there is no heredity; not if we carry out the deductions to be drawn from the premises these so-called Scientists have laid down. If there is no matter, and all spirit is God, why then Adam, not having

any body and his soul not being his own, it simply was God, not Adam, who was the author of 'error, falsity, the belief in original sin, sickness, and death.' Is that the God of the Bible?"

"About Adam: To material sense he was matter; to spiritual sense, an idea of God's—an expression of his being. Regarding this existence of evil which came through Adam, in the language of one of our authors, 'the answer to this question is of little importance; it is a waste of time.'"

"A good way to dispose of the question! But I did not expect an answer to that to which nobody can really reply; especially that sect which disposes of the devil with as great facility as it makes way with the flesh. What I started out to prove to you was, that you are not Christians and not Scientists. Your platform maintains that 'there is neither a personal Deity, a personal devil, nor a personal man.' If no personal Deity, Christ is not, to you, God manifest in the flesh. You are not, then, Christian; for in him, says the Bible, 'dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.'

"That you are not Scientists, proceeding

^{*&}quot; Mind-Healing; or, Selfhood Lost in Godhood," p. 4.

upon actual, indisputable knowledge, goes without proving. If you give the definition of science—which is 'truth ascertained,' 'penetrative and comprehensive information'-to your mystical theology, it is a mistaken assumption. If to the inner personal influence you exert in your endeavor to heal, it is an open question as to whether any one of you could give a lucid, substantial account of how such cures as are brought about by you really occur. Undoubtedly it all comes out of the resolute withdrawal of the mind of the patient from contemplation of his own ailments. That will account for the cure of mental and nervous difficulties. Organic diseases you do not cure. And so far as the ignoring of nervous troubles by the patient is concerned, physicians knew and acted upon its value long time ago."

"But how account for the cure of cases controlled by absent treatment?"

"I account for them by declaring such a thing the most arrant and insufferable nonsense!"

She colored redly, and the green suggestion in her eyes preponderated over the blue; but she controlled herself, and replied:

Facts will not bear you out in that state-

ment. Many people, who did not know they were under treatment, have been reached and cured in this manner."

"The world is wide, Sadie, and God and man have many resources. There are excitant causes in a human mind and body in Omaha, that some alleged healer in New York can know nothing about. As to whether so-called 'absent treatment' from New York cured that disease in Omaha, is 'absolutely unknowable.' Such evidence as could be produced in favor of a case like that, would not stand in any court of justice, or weigh with any jury under the sun. The sole value of 'treatment' of this kind does and must lie in the effect produced upon the patient's mind; and if the patient is unconscious of any treatment, there can be no effect."

"You say my statement is not susceptible of proof. Very well; we will leave that, then, for the present. But I take issue with you on the assertion that we do not cure organic diseases. You know, of course, that I am not a fair sample to judge by. My practice has been small and limited as yet; but I have seen some of our own townspeople cured of liver complaints, bronchial troubles, and rheumatism; and one man testifies that he has

been relieved of a ringing in his ears that had lasted for two years, and threatened to destroy his hearing."

"Perhaps; but, as I said before, you are not real physicians, and you do not know what other causes may have been at work in combating those troubles. Taking one's attention off a pain, rheumatic or otherwise, often relieves it; and if a man can make up his mind—I say if he can—that he has no muscles or nerves, and, consequently, they can not be rheumatic, he has arrived at a condition of existence that even rheumatism will not flourish in. A man becomes very peculiar under such circumstances. As to the ringing ear, the disease was probably in the auditory nerve; and the history of cases like that, I once heard an aurist say, shows that the moment the mind begins to dwell on it, the ear begins to ring. If the mind can be amused, entertained, and made to dwell upon something else, sometimes the ear will not ring for weeks; but let the person sit down at the end of that time and think about it, and it is as tuneful as ever. You heard him testify on an 'off' day. The entire structure of your faith is built on nebulous foundations."

"Of course," said she, smiling a little con-

strainedly, "if you impeach the testimony, and there is no umpire to arbitrate, I have nothing further to say. I would like to ask you, though, why you speak so disdainfully of Buddhism? What could have been more beautiful or elevating than the religion which Buddha taught?—which he experienced when he said, 'I, Gautama Buddha, devote myself to righteousness, so that I may arrive at the highest Nirvana.' Quotations I have read from old Buddhistic verse are very like in sentiment to the Christian hymns of to-day, stating the fleetness of life and the rest of the righteous after death."

"Yes," said he, dryly, "providing they escape ill Karma and re-birth,—are absorbed, as the Buddhist offspring (the advocates of Christian Science) hope to be, in the All-good. Buddha, according to his light, taught a beautiful philosophy of self-restraint and renunciation—gave warning, with no uncertain sound, that

'Our deeds follow us from afar, And what we have been, makes us what we are.'

But when that which is perfect is come, why seek truth in that which is only in part? Why go back to the morning twilight when searching for truth, when its full sun has

arisen? All the old philosophers can shame us with the renunciatory doctrines upon which they built up lives of austere rectitude. Don't stop with Buddha. Go through the entire list. All groping in the darkness for the God we know. Aurelius Antoninus had meditations on virtue that thrill even the Christian soul. What gave Socrates the power calmly to drink the hemlock bowl? I do not disdain Buddha's truths-only point out his errors. Do you refuse to see the similarity between those errors and the doctrine which you profess, comparing the two? Here is an excerpt from Buddhism very much to the point: 'So through endless ages yet to come, discharging these sacred duties, all sentient creatures, united at length with the divine essence, shall obtain supreme wisdom—the state that admits of no birth, the wisdom of Buddha himself.' But since you may have a prejudice against the title of Buddhism, why not adopt that of Spinozism? Although I don't see why you should be thus prejudiced, when Arnold's 'Light of Asia' has been recommended as a poem to be read 'in the light of this truth.' Spinoza, in the seventeenth century, taught that God 'is the cause of all things that exist, but not a different being from them; that there is only

one Being and one nature;' and, as in Christian science, the Deity is made sole agent in all evil as well as good. One of these teachers was a Hindoo, the other an Amsterdam Jew; but what is there in the Pantheistic instruction of either to which you dare attach the title Christian?"

"What's in a name?" queried she, lightly. "It's the doctrine, not the name."

"Not much in the name, unless it be used to convey a falsehood, which in this case it is. Why, if you were to go back to Orpheus, the earliest Grecian pantheist, who called the entire world the 'body of God,' and its several parts his members; or Aristotle, who agreed with him, claiming the co-eternity of God and matter, you find no such monstrous inconsistencies as your doctrine teaches. Plain pantheism is entitled to a degree of respect which Christian science can not and does not command from the thinking mind. When you say, as I have been reading in your creed, that 'the devil, or evil, is darkness, and Good, or God, the Infinite Mind, is but another name for light,' wherein do you differ from those whose names I have mentioned?"

"But, Francis, I have been looking more at the works we do, than at all this background you have been sketching in. You should believe our cause to be good 'for the very works' sake.'"

"The 'works,' as you call them, look specious, where they appear at all; but we have an infallible standard by which to pronounce judgment on them. The great apostle of Christianity, in writing to the Roman Gentiles, tells them that, 'if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.' Now, the 'first fruit' appearing in your platform says that, 'if a portion of the Infinite could enter limits, that portion would lose the nature of Deity.' That, in itself, proves the 'lump' not Christian, and the works arising from some other source, superinduced by some other power. Why, you surely remember how Pharaoh's magicians imitated the miracles wrought through Moses? Can not you see that you have been making unwarranted attempts at grafting the branches of a wild olive-tree on the trunk and root to which its very 'first fruit' is entirely alien? I will tell you what I think of these 'works,' and what most of the relapses and deaths, occurring after the patients have been pronounced cured by them, go far toward proving. I believe it is along this particular line that Satan finds one of the grandest opportunities of all the ages in which to appear as an angel of light, and deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. I think these 'works' are, for the most part, but a 'very evident seeming.' Only one word more, and that is this: Be careful what you do! I am not a very spiritual man, and a poor sort of Christian, as Christians go; but I should hesitate about rejecting the Christian religion for Pantheism, or about grafting on to it something so foreign to that which Jesus and his disciples taught. Your gospel is very different from that enunciated by Paul, who said: 'But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be'-'accursed,' the Old Version has it; 'anathema,' the New. Think about that, Sadie."

A silence that could almost be felt—so profound was it—settled upon the occupants of the little boat.

Sadie sat unusually erect; offended pride, or wounded feeling—it was difficult to tell which—quite discernible in both her attitude and expression.

But, whichever it might have been, Francis Bartlett could not forbear a sentiment of admiration for the self-control which she had exercised throughout the interview, and still manifested, although, as he considered, defeated in the argument. He did not stop to think that perhaps if the talking had been more equalized, she might have been able to give a little better showing to her side of the case, deplorable as it looked.

They had been very slowly moving down the stream as they talked, but Mr. Bartlett now quickened the rate of their speed by bending to the work with considerable assumption of energy.

How straight his back!—how square the set of his slightly-lifted shoulders! He swung evenly from the seat as if hinged there. There was rhythm, poetry, beauty, in his movement.

After a few moments' silence, Miss Spencer spoke again:

"There is one thing I wish to say to you. My visit to the Epperts is not altogether of the nature of a relief expedition, as I told you. There is something else connected with it. I do not wish to give you a false impression."

"Well, if you did give a wrong impression, probably you knew you had Scripture warrant for it. You know when the Lord sent Samuel down to Bethlehem to anoint David, he told him to make Saul's mind easy by giving out only a part of the reason for which he was going."

He felt, when he said this, that it was very probable that she did n't know; that perhaps she had never read it for herself, and if she had heard it from the pulpit, had forgotten. I think that, mixed up with other motives, he was trying to impress upon her that he was rather bright and knowing, and possessed of considerable information upon various subjects. If so, it must have been a little mortifying to have had her remark:

"Yes; you said that, I remember, in your last campaign speech, your plea in the Gunning case, and one or two others that I recall."

"O come, now! Was it so bad as that? I did n't know I ever sacrificed that red heifer in public but once."

"What I wished to say was, that-"

"You are going to doctor Joe?"

"No, sir! I have no masculine patients, at present. I do not go to 'doctor' any one; but his little daughter is lying, seemingly, very ill. She is a patient of Mrs. Morris's—

one of the graduates of our class—and Mrs. Morris was obliged to go East on account of her father's illness; he has since died. She desired me to take charge of the case, but I declined. She will give her absent treatment; but she asked me if I would not come and see her sometimes, and talk to her, and—well, try to encourage her. It is no falsehood, however, about their needs. Joe, as you call him, has—has the belief that he has inflammatory rheumatism. He has not worked for a long time, and they are very poor."

"I'm sorry for him, I'm sure; but the hen-roosts in this part of the country are not so likely to suffer while he suffers. What is the matter with the child?"

"'Liza? Why, the—the people around her must have impressions that affect her concerning heredity. Her mother—Joe's wife is her stepmother—died, seemingly of lung trouble. 'Liza seems to have a cough, and—the usual symptoms that go with it. I—"

"The child has consumption."

Miss Spencer shrugged her shoulders.

"No wonder," said she, "that people think they are sick and die, so long as the world's thought clings to a belief in evil and sickness, and is expressed in so bald a manner." "Who is Mrs. Morris? Not the tailor's widow?"

"I believe he once did that kind of work, but not for some years before his death."

"I know whom you mean. A good, amiable, motherly creature, without one grain of scientific or medical knowledge in her whole make-up. 'Angels and ministers of grace defend us!' Do you mean that 'Liza is lying there in bed, dying of consumption, and that all she has to relieve or help her is the 'absent treatment' of a woman like that?"

"Like that! What do you intend me to infer from that?"

"Why, nothing against her character, nor her ordinary grade of intelligence, but a very great deal against her pretensions as a healer. Mrs. Morris to do away with the physicians!

> 'Can such things be, And overcome us like a summer cloud, Without our special wonder?'"

"We will not discuss Mrs. Morris, if you please. I see we are almost at our stopping-place. There! Bring up alongside that flat rock to the left."

When he had helped her out, Francis Bartlett lifted from the bottom boards of the boat a basket and bundles of supplies, and then took the string of fish in the hand on which he wore the sard ring with the knight's head in intaglio. As he did so, Miss Spencer saw that the palm of it was very red, and looked suspiciously as if a blister had been raised upon it. He had worn no gloves, and his hands were tender from disuse.

"This way," said she; "I will follow."

CHAPTER VII.

The master of the house, just able to hobble about and warm his acidulated blood in the outdoor air, was sitting outside his small whitewashed, vine-covered log house, on which the morning-glory blossoms of purple and pink were still half open. It was one of those houses still to be found in the rural districts of some of the Middle and Western States, with the chimney attached on the outside, looking as if the chimney had first been built and the house accommodated to it.

"Rather modern," remarked the young man as they approached. "It looks as if here might be a center and school of advanced thought and cultured opinions."

"The disciples you talk so much about were ignorant fishermen."

"Yes; following a teacher, a leader, who 'spake as never man spake.' They were not reconstructing for themselves a religion and immortality out of their own ignorance and the ignorance of the ancients."

"Joe" sat in one chair, with his lame leg carefully deposited upon another in front of him. He held in one hand a stout hickory stick, which served the dual purpose of assisting him in locomotion and as a means of self-defense from the intrusion of any and all of the two or three half-clad, tow-headed children engaged in a game of "tag," rushing in and out of a thriving grove of sunflowers which surrounded the doorway.

He looked like a man who had drunk whisky until he had become what is known, in common parlance, as an "old soak." His coat was ragged, his trousers glazed and shiny; and his soiled check-shirt, open at the throat, showed a flabby neck and hirsute breast. Upon the whole, Mr. Eppert's appearance might be denominated as unsavory.

"You 'tarnal young 'uns," cried he, as one of the children ran against the chair on which his foot was resting, "ef yer do n't make tracks from here, I 'll brain the lot of ye!"

"This must be nice for 'Liza," said Francis.

"Polly! Polly!" called he, as he saw Mr. Bartlett approaching, loaded with supplies, and closely followed by Miss Spencer.

A lean, lank woman, in a faded calico

dress, from which all the color had been washed in some long-forgotten time, came, and put her head out of the door.

She had coarse, straight black hair, which had first been tied with a shoe-string at the back, with the tags in full view; then twisted and put up with that reminiscence of the past, a tuck-comb.

Her complexion was like that of women who live in the dry air and constantly blowing wind of the far West—brown, wrinkled, and dry, like parchment.

Her eye had a vague, speculative, far-off look. Francis and Sadie both felt as if she was giving too long a range to her glance to focus it fully on them.

"This yere is Lawyer Bartlett, old 'ooman," said Joe, performing the ceremony of introduction, "an' I reckon yer know as who the young 'ooman is. I've seen her yere before."

"Why, howdy, sir! Howdy, Miss Spencer! It's a poor place you've come to, but walk right in. The world's a-movin', and 'the rich and the poor meet together, and the Lord is the Maker of them all,' " said she, piously. "Jest aige around behind Josiah's cheer. His laig is like yer eye to tech it, it's that swelled an' sore."

"Ye're welcome, sir; and you too, ma'am," said Josiah, with his eyes on the basket and bundles and the fish. "Did n't expect ter have the honor, sir, of receivin' you under this yere 'umble roof." And he extended a spare, yellow hand, with knotted and distorted joints.

Francis took it gingerly, but Sadie acted on her theory of "no matter," and failed to see it at all; though her own pretty, slender hands were well protected from possible contact with long-wristed gloves of undressed kid.

"D' ye 'low you kin sqeeze a-past me? It 's like movin' a meetin'-house ter move me! I use' ter tell Polly she 's set in her ways; but she sez I'm 'setter,' now. Polly likes ter have her little joke. He! he! he!"

The idea of a joke in connection with Polly was an incongruous one, as she gazed at them with that complacent, melancholy, lack-of-focus gaze.

They "aiged a-past" and into the main room of the house, utilized as kitchen, parlor, and bedroom for the entire family, with the exception of 'Liza, who was as neatly and comfortably arranged for as the circumstances of the case admitted, in the room beyond. Even this apartment, despite its many and various uses, was scrupulously clean.

In waging a war of extermination against dirt, Mrs. Eppert always stopped short of Josiah. Something seemed to tell her that ammunition made use of in that direction would be wasted.

Francis Bartlett made a very polite little speech to Mrs. Eppert in presenting the parcels and fish, and said (with as much truth as is usually to be sifted out of such remarks) that he was "sorry to see Joe so broken up."

"Thank ye, sir. It's jest like Miss Spencer to bring them things—jest like her; an' the Lord knows that there's need enough of 'em. Yes, Josiah's been porely all spring, 'n so far this summer. 'Pears like we can't get him out of the notion of it. Butterworth says it's the sigh-attic nerve that's out o' kelter; but I say that what Josiah needs is to take his mind off er hisself. I says to him this morning, says I, 'Josiah, you must take your mind off er yourself, if you ever 'low ter sense it that ye're well.'"

Josiah broke in, from the open doorway:

"Polly's got a great jaw on'er. I'low she c'd talk all day. But how in creation, if

you'll excuse me, Miss, can a feller take his mind off er hisself, when he feels like he's all tied up in knots, an' the devil's a-pinchin' him with red-hot pinchers? How kin ye keep your mind off er yerself, when ye're one big pain all over, an' there ain't room in yer mind for nothin' else but to think on 't?"

"There ain't no devil, Josiah!" said Mrs. Eppert.

"What are you doing for your rheumatism, Joe?" asked Mr. Bartlett, from the wooden rocking-chair where Mrs. Eppert had seated him.

"That's jest it," said he, reaching into his pocket for a plug of tobacco, and biting off a generous chew; after which he extended it in the direction of Mr. Bartlett, who dismissed it with a wave of his hand.

"That's jest it. I had Butterworth up here a couple o' times, an' he 'lowed there's too much acid in my blood. He left me a kind er surrup to take internally, and some sort o' lin'ment to rub on out—ternally, but them there young 'uns, they broke the bottle a-'raslin'; and nex' time I sent for ter have some more, he wanted ter know who's a-goin' to be responsible for the pay, and he didn't send more'n a thimbleful. Folks

ain't mostly like you 'uns—so generous like."

Another wave of dismissal from the young lawyer, and the man returned to his favorite theme:

"That's jest it. The old 'ooman, she declared as how I did n't need no med'cine. She said my laig did n't ache, 'cause I had n't got no laig. She—"

"Josiah do n't 'pear to understand nothin' erbout spirichual things," said his wife, looking past them with her gaze of placid melancholy. "He do n't reelize that there ain't no matter, nohow; and that what ain't, can't hurt."

Francis stole a look at Sadie. He could only see her profile as she sat, but the cheek turned toward him looked a fiery red, and her expression, so far as he could discern, seemed disturbed and a trifle vexed. But she sat very straight and stiff.

He wondered if all this twaddle, in its coarser form, did not disgust and dishearten her with this senseless, scienceless chimera she had so eagerly embraced.

"I thought you said," continued he, "that Joe's leg was swollen, and very sore to the touch?"

"Well, sir, speakin' arfter the manner o' men, I s'pose it is that a way; but, to tell you the plain, ungarnished truth, Josiah's in a state of disharm'ny, an' when ye're in a state o' disharm'ny, you don't need no med'cine. Yer jest need to be harm'nized. Miss Bowersock, what lectured on Chrischen Science at the Hall in Easterville, jest larfed when Josiah's son-in-law, Jim McMurdy, told her what Butterworth said about its bein' the sigh-attic nerve. 'Nothin', with a pain in it!' said she; 'that's one of the beatin'est mysteries I ever heerd tell on.' And then Jim giv' her ten dollars, off hand, as he'd saved up; and she told him to persuade Josiah not to take no more med'cine, and she 'd giv' him absent treatment. And if Josiah'd only take his mind off er his seemin' self, I know he'd begin ter pick up."

Miss Spencer broke in, speaking swiftly and determinedly:

"Mr. Eppert should hold himself vigorously 'to his right of soul-growth, unobstructed and unretarded by physical defects,' as one of our writers truly says. Invalidism would not reward his highest efforts in this direction. Do you exercise 'expectant attention?' You know you should do this." Francis grinned a little under his mustache as he looked in Joe's direction. If this was a pearl of wisdom, it had certainly been cast under a hoof. Joe was scratching his head, with a dazed and bewildered look.

"I reckon you're right, Miss, but I don't seem ter sense it adzactly."

Francis pitied his erstwhile antagonist, and gave a turn to the conversation by suggesting that Mrs. Eppert dress some of the fish for supper, while Miss Spencer went in to see the little girl.

"And if nobody objects, I would like to go in and be introduced to her myself."

If any one objected, the objection remained unspoken, and Sadie and he went through the door into the little room beyond.

How a child of Joe's could be pretty Francis did not understand; but 'Liza was like a swan in a duck-pond.

"Her marm was better looking than I am, I reckon," said Mrs. Eppert when she saw the young man's look of admiring surprise at the first sight of 'Liza.

She was about thirteen years of age, so frail and slender that he almost feared to take the hand she held out to him lest it should break in his clasp. Her complexion was ghostly white; she had great, violet eyes and long, black lashes; and short, black hair of exceeding fineness, that curled in delicate rings all over her head. Her cheeks were a vivid scarlet, for she was burning with fever; and when she began to speak to Miss Spencer, a cough interrupted her.

"Now, 'Liza," said Sadie, brightly, "I have brought something for you in this basket."

She opened it beside the bed, and set out a trio of jelly-glasses, with garnet and amber contents. Next came a glass jar of rich Jersey milk, some lemons, and a package of sugar, a little majolica pitcher, filled with broth, and, last of all, a big bunch of flowers, of the choicest her aunt's garden afforded.

"They're awful beautiful," said 'Liza, as Sadie filled a mug standing in the window with water, from a pail near at hand, and put the blossoms into it, setting them where the invalid could see them without turning her head.

"Yes, dear," said Miss Spencer; "and God's world is full of beauty and sunshine and happiness; is n't it?"

The child rolled her head restlessly on the pillow, and her large, brilliant eyes glanced

toward the window from which the faded calico curtain was partially drawn back.

"I donno. I s'pose it is because he made it; but I do n't feel so much of the sunshine's I do of the pain. Ye see the sunshine's outer doors, an' it comes an' goes; but the pain an' the cough, they stays by all the time."

"O no, my dear; you must n't think of pains and cough. You must say to yourself that the world is full of God, and God and good mean the same thing; that you are his child and trying to please him, and that he gives you health and strength in return for your obedience; that evil and sickness can not touch you."

"That's what Mis's Morris told me; and she said there was n't no sickness; but when she was a sayin' it there was a awful pain in my side, so 't I screamed right out, an' then I had ter set up in bed and cough and cough. An' she said it was unfaith. Even marm was scairt about me, an' brung me a lickrish drop ter put in my mouth an' let the juice run down my throat. But Mis's Morris, she carried on awful. She said as how 't was wicked ter interfere with God's cures with his own childern."

Francis looked at Sadie, but she did not

return his glance. She was raising the little girl on her arm, as a paroxysm of coughing was coming on. After it was over, the young healer bent over the child and said:

"But you are getting better, you know."

"I donno. Sometimes I feel's if I never should get no better," panted the child. "Won't yer wet a rag with cold water' n lay it on my forrud? It's so hot."

Francis could see that the healer trembled visibly. That little pleading voice was so meek and melancholy and pitiful.

Sadie even moved a little, as if to grant this request, but checked herself, and her voice shook as she said, in a low tone:

"I would n't, dear, if I were you. It's only an idea that water cools fever. Let God have his own way with you."

He could stand no more of this. He jumped up, and took from his pocket the dainty napkin with the drawn-work on its border, and holding it out of the window, poured water over it until it was saturated with the cooling fluid. Then he went and laid it, smoothly folded, on the heated brow of the child.

"I do n't think God will be displeased with this," said he, in a strained, quiet voice. "God was very good when he made water to quench thirst and cool fever and refresh the parched body."

"O, how good it is! how good it is!"

'Liza reached up her little, burning hand, and put it over his, as it held the napkin to her head.

Tears came into the young lawyer's eyes; but he winked them away, and said, in a merry, pleasant tone:

"You must n't let anybody fool you out of having all the cold water you want, 'Liza. Water's free, thank heaven! the world is full of it, and a special blessing is promised to those who give it to one of 'these little ones.'"

He did not look to see how Sadie took this interference on his part. He felt very bitter toward her just then. What monsters these healers must be, to be able to turn aside such pleas as that, and what a monster they made out this "All-good" to be!

Francis Bartlett had never "spoken in meeting," nor lifted his voice in prayer in public, but now he said to 'Liza, softly:

"Did you ever hear of Jesus?"

"O yes!" said the child, a light coming into her listless eyes; "I like HIM! Sunday-

school teacher was here t'other day, 'n she said as how he liked childern better'n anybody else, 'n called 'em his lambs; an' how, arfter they was dead, he was a-goin' ter make 'em alive ergin, an' give 'em a home in a better world 'n this. An' she read me sumpin' 'bout 'em not bein' sick there no more, nor nothin' bad, where he's a-goin' ter take 'em. Yes, I like HIM! I askt her if he'd a-let me take med'cine ter make me feel better, if he'd a-been here now? an' she said he'd a-cured me his own self. I like Him better 'n God, 'cause God do n't like it, Mis's Morris says, 'f I do anything ter make me feel better. I'd like ter go to that a place where He is!"

"Well, 'Liza, you be a good little girl, and love Him, and one of these days you will go there."

"That 'd be real nice, and I never did have anything nice. Sumpin' always has hurted me, ever since I knowed anything."

"Nothing will hurt you there, 'Liza; for 'they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.'"

"Is there mountins there? Is there mountins?" asked the child, excitedly. "Marm come from Pennsylvany, where there's moun-

tins, an' I always did want to see mountins."

"Yes, there are mountains, or something like them, I think. But we must not tire you, 'Liza. You must eat Miss Spencer's goodies, and try to feel better, and we—she—will come to see you again, some day."

"Won't you come too, Mister? You'll want ter git this pretty rag back ergin, an' you kin tell me more about them mountins, an'—erbout Him. I like HIM."

"Yes, 'Liza, I'll come, and I'll try to see if we can't have something done to make you feel better."

Mrs. Eppert had put the skillet over the newly lighted fire in the adjoining room, and a strong scent of lard, in the process of heating, saluted their nostrils.

Mr. Bartlett went out and talked earnestly with Joe in a low tone, at the front door, while Sadie made a last effort with the sick child.

"You must love God, 'Liza, and try to please him," said she.

A troubled look came into the large violet eyes.

"I wisht I could love him better, Miss if he only was like *Him*, I 'low I could now." "He is all goodness, 'Liza—he wants you to forget all about yourself, and about being sick, and get well."

"I'll try, Miss, but it's tol'able hard forgittin," said she, mournfully.

Sadie said no more, but kissed her goodbye, and went out; and she and Francis, followed by many and voluble thanks, walked down to the water together.

Neither of them spoke, except with the briefest and most indifferent civility, and long silences ensued.

There was now no dallying with the oars. The sunset, magnificent and golden, was at their backs, and Mr. Bartlett seemed bent upon getting away from its enchanted region—he rowed so earnestly.

The banks were fringed with willows, oaks, and poplars,

Turning up each silver side, To the sunlight's mellow tide.

From the farms on either side, the meadows sloped down to "the crick's" edge. Here and there a mild-eyed cow, not yet "driven up," was standing knee-deep in the lazy flood.

They dispersed a small fleet of snowy-rigged geese, and put to flight an argosy of quacking ducks. They skirted a reef of

sedge near shore, its crowding culms bannered with iris.

And so, by degrees, they came again to their own lives and places.

As Francis helped Sadie ashore, he was thinking:

"I wish 'Liza could see the 'mountins' I lately saw." And then a couple of lines came into his memory:

"Less blue than radiant,
Like angels' garments blanched with God."
But of what thought Sadie?
Who knows?

CHAPTER VIII.

RANCIS BARTLETT had made up his mind to let Sadie "go." As she had been "go"-ing up to this time, however, undeterred by whatever he might think or feel, there would have seemed, to the casual comprehension, very little in this resolution, so savagely adopted, that would be likely to influence the young lady's affairs in any manner. And yet he felt somehow that there was, and that she was thereby the loser.

For three whole weeks he stuck to the office all day and every day; and as he was a young man who in general required frequent holidays, the junior partner and the clerk compared notes on the subject, and wondered what was the matter with "the old man."

Mrs. Weeks reaped the benefit of this diligence, and several others who, like Hamlet, had long been caviling at the "law's delays."

He and Sadie for a few days were very stilted, and the relations between them were strained when they met at table or about the house; but gradually, as is usual among people living under the same roof, things resolved themselves into an every-day naturalness, upon the surface, at least.

A few days after the episode of their visit to the Epperts, Mr. Bartlett received a note from Joe—dirty, ill-scrawled, and worse spelled—which was constructed after this fashion:

"mister bartLet. i hed a tuf time with th old womn, but she aint her gal, nohow, an she hed ter nuckle down becoz im the man uv my one hous, an i perpose ter do wat i think best. lizy sens her luv. she thinks yure the nices man she ever seen. buterworth sez shes gone to long ter git wel, but he kin eze her up considble. The trusteas wuz here ter see erbout helpin us, as you sent. i told um you was goin ter pay my dockters bill an lizys so no more at presint from josiah Epert ter lawyer bartLet. June. 1889."

The recipient of this effusion folded it up, and put it in his pocket-book with a half-laugh. 'Liza's compliment had touched something in his nature that responded with a feeling of joy. This doing for somebody else had a pleasure about it he had never so fully experienced before. He felt as happy as if

he had been supporting a missionary orphan in China or India.

Strict attention to truth demands the statement that at this time Sarah Katherine Spencer, Metaphysician and Healer, was deeply troubled.

She was a person accustomed to act, from early girlhood, upon her own responsibility, without giving any great amount of thought as to the point of view from which her action would be scrutinized by "the man on the outside." Her aunt's rule, after she came to her at the age of seventeen, had been lax and gentle; and the ten years' difference between her age and that of her guardian had not been sufficiently conspicuous to seem to justify him in interfering in any particular, save where her money matters were concerned.

It is true that, up to the present period, her independence had dealt simply with matters of personal taste and habit, and had never before led her into a position where her conduct might be weighed, measured, and judged with regard to the justice or injustice of the effect it produced upon others.

She had been a girl of quick intelligence, subtle wit, and fine fancy, but her emotions had been slow in maturing.

The hour had come to her later than with most young women of culture and education, when the progeny of ideality began to plume themselves for flight. And, coming later, it furnished for these fledgelings more subtle pinions, more intricate featherings, and induced them to seek more dizzy heights.

The wave of modern fanaticism, miscalled Christian Science, had reached its tidal-rise at a time when her heart had become anxious for something to absorb its affections, and her mind longed for an object to guide and give direction to its fretting ambitions.

If some one had been near her at this critical hour, who, with clear logic and affectionate persuasion, could, without displaying too evident a purpose, have convinced her that indorsement of such a doctrine was the most futile Quixotism—if its evils extended no further than the folly line; if she could have been shown that her theory concerning its possible blessings to humanity was as unfounded as the Don's in regard to the origin of Mambrino's helmet, she might never have committed herself to so mistaken an enthusiasm.

It was the real nobility of soul within her which had responded so readily to the idea—

"All God! All good!" This philosophic idealism, with its formula of "no evil and no death," had fascinated her generous, kindly nature with the jubilant prospect of rising above these two evils and limitations, which make so much of human work and effort weak and inefficient—which appall the heart that would otherwise be strong and intrepid.

She had said to herself, and others had emphasized it, that she must work—for something, for somebody, for this very cause! Work! work! Work! That is the clamorous cry of this brazen-tongued age; and how many a wrecked life, goaded on by its insistent and intolerant demand to work with which God never meant it to identify itself, could testify, with but slight change, in the language of Madame Roland: "O work! how many crimes are committed in thy name!"

The members of human society are not content, like Joan of Arc, to listen simply to the "voices" giving direction to their own careers, but, like Peter, they insist on questioning, "And what shall this man do?" without waiting to hear the divine reply, "What is that to thee?"

A convert like Miss Spencer could but give prestige to a cause like this; not her wealth and position alone, but her intelligence and education would fit her to champion its illusive subtleties with less personal persecution than might be met with by others.

So, step by step, scarcely knowing whither she was led, the young girl, urged on by older heads, became, first, a learner of this new "Truth," then a teacher; and flattered and encouraged, stepped out on the broad assumption that she, like the apostles of old, could, through Christian Science, heal the sick.

I think it is but fair to say of the majority of these so-called healers, that, like Sadie Spencer, "they know not what they do."

If I am rightly informed, a large number of them are members of Christian Churches, and in conduct of life are practical Christians; quite regardless of any phase of the subject, save that metaphysical one which, under some conditions, by the exercise of mind over matter and a species of hypnotism, enables them to relieve some people of some diseases.

If this were all that the so-called "science" represents, it would in no way clash with the claims of Christ and the Church upon them; but when it denies the existence of that evil from which Christ came to deliver and redeem

us, of that Body sacrificed for our sins, of that Resurrection which is the world's only proof that if a man die he shall live again, they are in "a strait betwixt two."

When they dispense with the materiality of the cities where Jesus's mighty works were done; when they sweep away that sea to whose stormy waters he cried, "Peace, be still;" when they banish that Cross by whose blood we are "brought nigh" unto the Father; when they ignore that holy tear which he shed at the tomb of Lazazus; when they proclaim "Our Church is built on Christ, not a person, but the principle that Christ said is the way, the truth, and the life,"—they have destroyed all that is Christian in theology.

When "the Father" is represented as giving the body false and unreliable senses, which carry to the soul untrue impressions of the earth which he has created; when they treat as a fraud upon our faith (giving no reason for its perpetration) this lovely world which he has made, with its exquisite scenery, its changing seasons, its beautiful embellishments of flowers and shrubs, its provision of fruits and grains, its mines of wealth, its treasure-house of scientific truths waiting for

men to explore, discover, and appropriate; when it begets doubt of nature, upon which the eternal truth of science rests,—it blasphemes God and makes of him a liar!

O God of the Bible, who declarest thou dost pity them that fear thee as a father has compassion on his own children, for abstract principles of universal Life, Truth, and Love, said by this sect to be the one God, man will not give thee up!

O Jesus, our atonement, our peace, our redemption, and the one hope set before us! thou, whose blood-stained foot-prints mark the pathway of human progress from the dust to heaven, for an impersonal ideality bearing thy name, but destitute of thy merits, man will not give thee up!

O Holy Spirit, blessed Comforter! Guide to human ignorance, Solacer of human woe, Enlightener of the darkness wherein sin dwells, Accuser of the affections that hold it dear, Revealer of the things of Christ to him who will receive them, for a "divine science, revealing and explaining this triune principle," man will not give thee up!

The religion of the ideal and the idea only must ever be limited to the elect few, whose mental aptitude or worldly situation incline them to and make possible the pursuit of abstruse and chimerical speculations. If these find such a religion lacking in those elements which sustain, uphold, and cheer on life's weary journey, they may find this lack compensated for by the activity required of the mind in its fruitless endeavor to grasp, understand, and appropriate to human necessities its peculiar and puzzling dicta. But it is to the ear and heart of the great, toiling world, struggling in the vortexes of labor, sin, and misery, that the Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of Christ appeal, with the blessed call: "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved."

Miss Spencer had been prepared for criticism, perhaps ridicule; but of philippic, such as Francis had launched against what she represented, she was not at all expectant.

She had looked upon this assumption of "no body" and "all God" as a sort of higher Christian life; regarded it as an advanced religious state or condition, which it behooved all believers to attain to as speedily as possible. She had not reflected that Christianity could have no appeal from that authoritative utterance, "I am the Way, the Truth, and

the Life," while she read mystic philosophies in order to discover the "Truth."

But the bold utterance of those words, "You are not Christians!" had brought her dreamy, misty fancies up against a very lofty mural obstruction.

Was the doctrine, then, unchristian? Did it, indeed, conflict with the revealed religion of the highest school of believers?

If this young woman of quick intellect had been in the habit of reading her Bible, such a question would not have been possible; it would, at least, have been ridiculous. Although, strange as it may seem, many Christian Science advocates profess to believe in that Book.

Have you never had your mind excited, exercised, seemingly filled and absorbed, with some thought, feeling, or interest which apparently occupied and possessed it to the exclusion of all else, and yet been conscious, when you paused to analyze your mental sensations, that through it all, under it, and interwoven with it, was another theme which the mind had refused to dismiss?

And now, for the first time—because it was the first time that the two subjects had been arraigned before her as antagonistic—

she was aware that never, during her brief and spirited career as a learner, teacher, and healer, had she failed in intellectual assent to the Christian dogmas.

As she "pondered these things in her heart," it dawned upon her, with wonderful clearness, what such abandonment, even in theory, might comprehend. It meant good-bye to all hope of personal enjoyment and happiness in that "land that is fairer than day," in which, instinctively, nearly all human creatures, in this enlightened age and Nation of religious liberty, believe.

Absorbed in the "all good," there would be a loss of independent being, individuality, character, taste, and continued advancement on the line of personal preference and election. The prospect of final reunion with friends would no longer assuage the woe and misery of the separation brought by death.

And for what should all this be renounced? Something which "keeps the promise to the ear, and breaks it to the hope"

It was, to her fevered and distorted imagination, like Victor Hugo's description of the man obliterated by the quicksand, with everything before his view which made prolonged existence to be desired.

She had sported this new-old doctrine, which she and her fellow-scientists had gone back to six centuries before Christ to resurrect, as she would have worn a new bonnet; because, at the first glance, it seemed attractive—not understanding or in the least appreciating its responsibilities. But now, as she sat in her pretty room, with its artistic litter, graceful hangings, fine furniture, and dainty bric-à-brac—all of which seemed to mock and jeer at her with their testimony to her very evident belief in the existence of the human body—she felt the first accusing murmurs of a reproving conscience.

She sat and stared at the little Bible, bound in crimson plush, which lay on the embroidered cloth that covered her table; but she felt she dared not unclose its clasped pages.

She had preached "another gospel," and she could still hear the intonation of Francis's voice, as it had sounded when he said "accursed" and "anathema."

For many days, wherever she went, she could also hear a weak, sick, plaintive little voice, appealing to her:

"Won't yer wet a rag with cold water, 'n lay it on my forrud?"

How had she dared to deny this request and in God's name too? She, who had never been ill, never burned with fever, never suffered the restless pangs and tortures that come with the slow death from incurable disease, had refused to this innocent child cold water, which God gives so freely to all!

Why do we eat? Why do we drink? God can keep us alive without eating and drinking, if it be his will, just as he could have cooled the fever in poor little 'Liza's blood by a miracle, when simple, near-at-hand, natural agencies were there to be employed.

Sadie thought over this phase of the subject not a little. She remembered a number of dinners and luncheons, where she had met some of these Christian Science friends of hers, and recalled, with no little dismay, the remembrance of appetites they had brought to these feasts.

Her mind reverted in particular to Mrs. Littlefield's decided preference for the second-joint of the turkey, Mrs. Hollister's enjoyment of okra, and young Mr. Kridlinger's fondness for a fruit-mosaic at dessert.

This, in itself, was not strange perhaps, since the world about us has a fixed idea that food is necessary for the nourishment and sustenance of life; but what was singular was the fact that no single one of these adherents to the faith had lifted up his voice in protest to his fellows against pandering to so debasing and unworthy an opinion of a stupid world, by lending to it the support of their misleading example

If, as these people claimed, poison itself could not shorten existence, if it were not for the credence given to its power by a mistaken belief, there being nothing essentially harmful inherent in the substance itself; and if medicine, as a healing and remedial agent, owed its status simply to the assent of a demoralized opinion; if spirit was the only life, in itself invincible, immortal, a part of Deity, and body only its expression,—why, why did they lay such wonderful stress upon some features of their argument, and say absolutely nothing upon other points quite as tenable? Why invent reasons, make inductions, and draw conclusions without inferring further propositions which, as the day the night, must surely follow?

But when Sadie had advanced thus far, her head began to whirl, and she felt that "'t were imbecile hewing out roads to a wall." In the meantime, Miss Spencer did not go out in the mornings, so often as formerly, to see patients.

The telephone-bell gave an occasional tinkle, but the conversations seemed brief and pertinent, and Sadie soon "rang off."

During those days she began to think very seriously of marrying George Langdon, and going away—so far away she should never see nor hear of anything or anybody connected with the last few months of her life and history.

She did not discourage him quite so determinedly as she had done. She let him waste more or less of her time in the evenings—sometimes in the parlor; sometimes out under the stars, with Aunt Harriet as dragon near at hand.

And, to put it plainly, the dear woman felt as dragonish in her disposition to make short work of this knight, as any mediæval monster with ponderous scales, multiplied coils, and smoking jaws, that gave occasion for the prowess of the chevalier-heroes of the Middle Ages.

She was a very innocent-looking and welldisguised dragon, and the unconscious young man did not even feel afraid of her, as she rocked placidly to and fro in her creaking chair, dressed in a cool gray muslin, and with her hair, just turning to silver, rolled up with side-combs, in "puffs" upon either side of her head.

He even felt a mild interest in witnessing the vigorous ardor with which she made occasional onslaughts with her fan on depredating detachments of the *Culex* family—

> "And routed them, and scouted them, And put them all to flight."

This fan was composed of a bamboo frame and handle, and was covered with bright red paper, on which was a very fair representation of Asiatic art, in the form of a —. Francis declared it was a "galumphing jabberwok," but Sadie had written under it: "The lady, or the tiger?"

He did not know how potent an influence this fan was to wield in the shaping of his destiny.

CHAPTER IX.

OR Mrs. Bartlett was "musing," while the fire of George Langdon's passion burned.

Once or twice she had appealed to her son to know why he did not stay at home more in the evenings, and insinuated that by failure to do so, a rival was causing him to be forgotten and unmissed; but these appeals fell short of producing the desired effect.

Once in awhile the two young men met, and exchanged civilities—talked of the weather, the last deal in wheat, or some bill that had been introduced in Congress—when the lawyer remembered an engagement, consulted his watch, and was off, leaving the coast clear and the field free.

Aunt Harriet was provoked, and Sadie confirmed in her belief that "nobody cared what she did, and she did n't either."

"He is very inoffensive—a little too effeminate to suit Sadie, I should think; but that's her business," was the tenor of the lawyer's thoughts, as he strode off in the direction of the Hollisters.

And here was another fly in Mrs. Bartlett's ointment—Flora Hollister

This young lady was *petite* and plump, with small hands and feet, a bushy black bang, dark eyes, and clear, dark complexion, and a bird-like way of putting her head on one side to look at you.

She was one of those girls who appear equally well in almost any *rôle* or assumption of character, as all of them seem like the fad of an hour—to be soon discarded for a successor. But they were all, for the nonce, attractive, charming, and for the most part amusing. Being troubled with the possession of no pronounced qualities or proclivities, she was one of the most graciously adaptable beings in creation.

Of almost any two alternatives or extremes, this girl, like the ox on the ancient coin between the plow and the altar, was always "ready for either."

Nobody quite respects a character like this, but everybody took her at her face value, and all allowed themselves to like her for the fifteen minutes that she appeared to be any one thing. She was merry with those who were glad; but declared to the grief-stricken and sorrowful that she "presumed none of us

found life very charming," and dropped with them a sympathetic tear.

For a few weeks past she had been engaged in the popular search for "Truth," but when Francis Bartlett came home after his Western trip, she seemed to find him more to her taste than theology—new or old.

She lived not far away, and fell into a habit of dropping in whenever she had reason to suspect the young man would be at home. Sometimes it [was to get a cake recipe, or to find out for her mother how to make a certain kind of pickles, or to share some piquant morsel of gossip which she had just picked up.

At first she brought her books, to discuss points with Miss Spencer, or to ask questions; but as that young lady, after the episode at the Epperts', staid in her own room a considerable portion of the time—especially when Francis was about—she did not always inquire for her, nor mount the stairs to seek her society.

Francis had long ago weighed the attractions of this versatile, chameleon-like creature, and found them decidedly wanting in magnetic power for him; but, like most young men, sore over the neglect of one girl whom he did care for, he allowed himself to be flat-

tered by the evident preference of another for whom he did not. So, when Flora Hollister ran in, wearing her long, lacy-looking, white apron, freshly creased, as if just put on—but worn to indicate absorption in domestic affairs—they laughed and talked of "trifles light as air," until Flora would often forget how time was flying. It would be dusk before she remembered it, and then he would be compelled to walk home with her.

Sadie often saw these two figures stroll out into the summer twilight together, and would quote mentally, with perhaps a little bitterness: "Cast off their bright skins yearly, like the snake!"

But all these complications were becoming quite unbearable to Mrs. Bartlett, who determined to try and unravel them. At least, she would give both Sadie and Francis an opportunity to make up their misunderstanding—whatever it might be—without that rebel, or that brazen girl, hanging about.

"Frank," said she, one morning, as he was leaving for the office, "can you give us this afternoon? Sadie and I want to go out to Aunt Betsy Glover's, to see about the currants for my jelly. I'm afraid she's going to disappoint me, and not bring them until it gets

too late. They say currant-jelly won't jell after the fourth of July."

This was the first Miss Spencer had heard about it, but she looked resigned.

"Perhaps. About what time do you wish to start?"—looking at his watch.

"Well, I must have my after-dinner nap," said Mrs. Bartlett.

"And I have some sewing to do," said Miss Spencer.

Sewing! He looked at her more kindly than he had for a week. He fancied it was the good women of the world who sew.

"How will four o'clock suit you?—both of you? I shall be at the court-house until half-past three."

"Four will suit me admirably," said his mother; and Sadie bowed assent, in answer to his inquiring look in her direction.

"Get that gentle horse of Raymond's, and one of his double-seated carriages," said his mother.

"That's likely, ma mere—don't you think it is? I would better drive a sheep, and be done with it. Why the animal is n't more than half alive."

"And the live half is two-thirds paralyzed," said Sadie.

He noiselessly clapped his hands together in silent applause.

"Sadie is like me—she likes to feel the wind blow when she drives."

Mrs. Bartlett followed her son to the gate.

"One word," said she; "you are always being let in for one thing or another lately, but do n't you, under any provocation, ask that brazen girl to go along."

"Oho! Sets the wind in that quarter? Well, then, you keep the rebel away."

"You may strictly rely upon that."

Sadie had been mysteriously busy in her own room for very many days. She had done comparatively little going out, had been refused to most of her callers, and had received bundles, the contents of which she had neither explained nor referred to in her aunt's presence.

Mrs. Bartlett's curiosity was piqued. She had a sincere desire to know what on earth the girl was about.

In Christian Science circles it was supposed that her unusual retirement was due to the fact that her next lecture appointment was not far off, and that she was "studying up," and preparing herself for that momentous occasion.

But Mrs. Bartlett knew better. She was too much of a lady to intrude, uninvited, upon Sadie's privacy; but, the doors standing open throughout the house, she heard the hum of Sadie's light-running machine, and knew that Esoteric Buddhism had nothing whatever to do with it.

What could she be doing?

Caroline Carpenter came every spring and fall, and spent two or three weeks in the construction of Sadie's *lingerie*; and Mrs. Fowler, who now advertised herself as Madame Henrietta Jocelyn Fowler, was her dressmaker—always charging her a little more for the same grade of work than most of her other customers.

So Sadie could not be adding to the contents of her own wardrobe

The dear lady sighed over the problem, and was compelled to admit that she could not solve it.

But after she had wakened from her nap that afternoon, and dressed herself, and rearranged the silver-tinged puffs of luxuriant hair, wondering if Frank would be on time, she heard Sadie's voice, calling to her from the head of the stairs:

"Aunt Harriet!"

"What is it, dear?"

"Please come up, Auntie; I've something to show you. I would have told you about it before, but I was afraid you would want to help me, and I wished to do it all myself."

Mrs. Bartlett hurried up the stairway with so agile a tread that she had to stop at the landing and catch her panting breath.

"I'm stouter than you are, my dear," said she, presently.

"I should hope so! But even young women don't run up-stairs now; they know better."

"But there's some excuse for me. I'm afflicted, like Bluebeard's wives, with an insatiable desire to see."

Sadie motioned her to precede her into the room; and as she stepped across the threshold, she stopped short, and looked around her with a puzzled air. The bed and chairs, at first sight, seemed completely covered with articles of the finest and most dainty underwear, spread out to display to fullest advantage the delicate material, careful workmanship, and beautiful trimmings employed in their construction.

As soon as Mrs. Bartlett could concentrate her attention, she discovered, by taking them up and examining them one by one, that here were one-half dozen cambric night-dresses of softest finish; some were embellished with lace, and others with ruffles of hemstitched linen lawn, and there were yet others with their Mother Hubbard yokes fashioned from drawn-work, purchased by the yard, and softly edged. But there were no stiff embroidery nor troublesome tucks about any one of them, and they were all too small for Sadie.

Near these was a little pile of soft, ribbed undervests, so fine they could almost be drawn through a ring. She had been obliged to send away for them; and through the open scallops at the neck of each she had drawn a narrow ribbon of cream-colored lutestring, and tied it in a double bow.

Here, at the foot of the bed, with every stitch carefully set, and looking coquettish as to make, but pathetic in size, was a pair of white flannel bed-shoes, bound with pink, satin ribbon, on each of which was a little, flat, pink satin dahlia.

Next, lay a dozen hemstitched handkerchiefs, with unobtrusive narrow hems, all folded ready for the tiny breast-pockets upon every gown.

Amid a heap of soft, bright colors, she dis-

tinguished two loose, easy-looking, little dressing-sacks, of eider-down flannel; one striped in pink and blue, and the other a soft shade of scarlet. Both of these were tied with ribbons at the neck.

On a chair near the bed were a half-dozen sheets—not linen, but of finest cotton. Miss Spencer had a prejudice in their favor. Above them were the same number of pairs of pillow-cases, finished with lace. There were a dozen long, white damask towels; four of them bordered in red above the knotted fringe, four in blue, and four in buff. Four damask tray-cloths, chain-stitched, in wash-silks, and one dozen napkins of the same quality and of satin softness, lay together.

Under these was a fleecy, white wool shawl, with a border in shell pattern.

"Tell me, Aunt Harriet! Have I forgotten anything? Is there everything here that an invalid should have? See! Here is her little dressing-case!"

She lifted the plush cover, and displayed on the dark red lining a square hand-mirror, with twisted, amber-colored handle, and comb and brush to correspond.

"Whom are all these things for Sadie? Or, do you intend to start a fancy bazar?"

"O! Didn't I tell you? They're for 'Liza. Poor, little 'Liza Eppert. She's so patient, and so sick."

"But will they know what to do with such things, and how to take care of them?"

"I will teach them what to do, and Mrs. Eppert is a tidy woman; she will keep them nice. Caroline has been making a little, light, cheese-cloth comfort—white, knotted with red; some curtains, and some pillows, for her little bed. It's so pretty, aunt! The prettiest little brass bedstead in the catalogue that came with Dean's furniture. He sent for it for me, and the mattress. There's a miniature chiffonier, of cherry-wood, with drawers to keep her things in, all by themselves; and such a pretty little chamber-set—so cool-looking, and restful—white, with a wreath of green leaves around it. Just like the service that goes with her little brass tray.

Mrs. Bartlett sat down, and drew a long breath of stupefaction and surprise.

"Does Francis know anything about all this?"

Sadie threw up her head with a graceful, stag-like air that was very self-assertive.

"Francis does not need to know it, so far as the money goes. It is my interest money,

to do with as I like. And I intend, no matter what anybody says, to see that little 'Liza never wants for anything again, so long as she lives. I told Mr. Dean to furnish a comfortable, easy rocking-chair, with the other things, so that if she is able at any time to sit up, she can have it to use."

Mrs. Bartlett made no reply, and Miss Spencer suddenly broke out, saying:

"Don't let me ever hear anybody talk slightingly of money. It is wicked; it is cowardly! Money is a good gift of God, and sometimes I think that if people who are almost without it, only had a little more of it, they might live better lives. I know they would be happier. It doesn't seem to me that the 'deceitfulness of riches' has half so much to answer for in spoiling people's natures, embittering them, and hardening their hearts, as the intolerable slavery of poverty."

There was considerable sense of humor in Mrs. Bartlett's composition, and it showed itself at this juncture. I feel confident that what followed did not simply happen. I think she must have been over the ground before, and that she knew her way. She reached over to the table, took up a certain

one of the books lying there, opened it, and read aloud, as follows:

"Rules on Sitting Down to Treat Yourself for Poverty.

"Say to yourself that because my father and mother were poor, it is no sign that I am poor. There is no such thing as heredity. God is rich, and I am an emanation from God; consequently, what is his is mine, and therefore I can not be poor, for my own will come to me."

In the midst of this reading, the door shut very vehemently, and Mrs. Bartlett, looking up from the book, found herself the only occupant of the room.

At this moment Francis drove up, punctual to his appointment; and his mother looked out at the high-mettled team he was holding well in hand, with many misgivings, and the firm conviction that it was frisky as Phaeton's.

Снартка Х.

RS. BARTLETT and "Aunt Betsy" had gone down into the garden to look at the currant-bushes, and Francis and Sadie were left to their own resources.

"Let us take a little walk," said he, "while they are away."

Sadie put on the hat she had thrown off for coolness, and signified, in an indifferent way, that she was willing.

They stepped out on to the roomy, old-fashioned porch, running the entire length of one side of the house, and stepped a moment to see Aunt Betsy's "help" feed the chickens.

This "help" was like what Francis had sometimes heard his mother (who still retained traces of her Yankee origin) speak of as a "great, gangling creature," in a slat sun-bonnet, and a very skimp calico gown.

Sadie called the feathered brood that surrounded the girl "chickens," although it included numerous hens and roosters, as well.

Francis looked at them speculatively, as he and his companion passed down the gravel walk, kept within metes and bounds, and protected from the encroachment of vagrant grass-spears by round cobble-stones set closely together, smeared with a plenteous coat of whitewash.

Even the rounded tops of the boulders, here and there to be seen, raising their rugged shoulders out of the lush grass, and which presumably had been where they were now found since some long foregone period, had surrendered their picturesqueness to the insatiable onslaughts of some artist in lime.

"I want to ask you a question," said he. "Yes?"

"Whenever you have heard a rooster crow—away, 'way off, on a still spring day—did it ever make you feel—I hardly know how to describe it—sort of queer? Did it put you in mind of something you couldn't remember? Did some part of your nature stir and tremble, and—"

She looked up at him with an expression of sympathetic understanding, saying, eagerly:

"Yes, yes! Has it had that effect on you likewise?" Then, demurely, "Perhaps it's an evidence of re-birth."

"Or a two-lobed brain. But, seriously, Sadie, it seems to me that some of the most in-

spiring sentiments and sensations of the human soul are purveyed to it through the instrumentality of sound. What a wonderful God—how benevolent, and something more than that, which there is no word of sufficient scope or force to express, to bestow upon man two such senses as those of sight and hearing!"

"I have noticed the effects of sound you speak of; more especially on Sabbath days, when everything was particularly quiet. Sometimes it has brought the tears into my eyes, and, like David, I have longed for wings—wings—"

She stopped suddenly, blushing, and half laughing.

"It is an evidence that, under all your outward mistakes your soul's aspirations are making themselves felt. There are people who, because they see professors of the Christian religion enjoying life and appreciating its good things, think that they are well enough satisfied with 'the life that now is' without having any yearning desire for a better one to come. I think, though, there was never a truer thing written, nor expressed in more exquisite language, than that of Bishop Foster in his book 'Beyond the Grave.' It struck me so forcibly that I committed it to memory. He says if

the soul of man has always to live here, 'the earth, that was once so great, will become too narrow for it, and too gross. Beauties will come, and muster before its interior eye, that will make all earthly beauty fade; the glory of sun, moon, and stars dwindle before the greater glory of unseen heavens; music will ravish its inward ear, that will make all the grosser sounds of earthly harmonies discords; loves will draw it deeper than all earthly sympathies; it will become an exile, a captive, pining for deliverance; earth will no longer be a home for it; it will account itself a stranger and a pilgrim. Its gaze will be turned upward, not to the heavens of suns and stars, but to the greater heaven, where dwell other powers and potentates—the infinite empyrean of truth and love, and spiritual thrones, and dominions.' Yes; when our souls speak, their cry is for 'wings, wings.'"

Sadie was silent. This was a phase of Francis's nature she had never seen before.

He spoke again, shortly. "Life is so brief," he said, "and so uncertain. No time for wandering in 'by and forbidden paths,' from which we must come back at length, foot-sore, disheartened, and weary, to the only Way. Think it all over, Sadie, and be sure of your ground."

She did not reply to this; but as the sun flashed in her eyes, she stopped, saying:

"Dear me! I must go back for my parasol!"

"No, no! Wait a minute, and I will fetch it."

But Mr. Bartlett was gone more than a minute, and when he returned he did not have the parasol.

"It is n't to be found. Take this; you can use it as a screen," said he, handing her his mother's red fan.

She took it with an expression of countenance, which, as "iron sharpeneth iron," struck a mischievous sparkle from his eyes, and they laughed in unison. All gravity instantly vanished. "Do you suppose Aunt Betsy will invite us to stay to supper?" asked he, whimsically, swinging open the gate which gave access to a narrow strip of ground which flanked a country lane.

"Well, now, do you know, I don't know? I saw a frying-pan heating on the stove when we passed the kitchen door."

"Perhaps they're going to 'hot-pot' us." Sadie rolled her eyes with a dolorous look, and again they laughed.

O, innocent, idle talk and laughter! How

soothing, how comforting ye are! How many a rough place in life's journey have ye smoothed for foot-sore humanity, by bringing temporary forgetfulness of self, and self's trials and burdens, while self laughed by the way!

How many an incipient wrinkle have ye banished, ere it etched its remorseless line upon the troubled brow, to "go no more out forever" till it crumble into dust! And despite all assertions to the contrary, which some long-faced disciplinarians of the world, who feel that they must render personal account for its piety and its morals, may make, such can not be the "idle words" for which God shall call man into judgment. Sweet air of June! How inspiring, how delicious, how tender! How delicate and fragrant with the scent of the fields, the strawberry, and the rose! How like a poem to live in June, and be near to nature's heart! Robert Browning wrote verse, in which he said we have

"Never the time and place
And the loved one all together;"

but here was Francis, in this decline of an exquisite June day, strolling along through a bit of Arcadian landscape, with Sadie by his side—not in her grenadier dress, not as high priestess of some repulsive faith, not as any-

thing that disturbed or troubled—only as a gentle and tender-hearted woman, whose sweet, becoming seriousness of a few moments past was crested with a sparkle of that humorous mirth which skirts the border-land of tears.

She wore a straight, flimsy gown, creamtinted, with here and there, far apart, coollooking discs of palest green. There was olive velvet at the throat and wrists, and silver clasps at the waist-line confined the soft folds of the silken vest. Her yellowish hat, bent in æsthetic curves, was circled with a wreath. Now, there are wreaths and wreaths. This was no riotous overflow of "roses that had never been in bud," nor yet of Levantine poppies. If this wreath was of flowers, it was of flowers so tender in their tint they had not lost the greenness of the leaf; and if of leaves, they were potential things that might develop into flowers.

Francis may be excused for indulging the pretty fancy that she seemed like spring come back to walk with him in summer-time.

"Will you think me too extravagant if I tell you something?" asked she. She had so soon forgotten that he did "not need to know."

"No," said he; "I never thought you extravagant except in one particular."

She did not ask him what that one particular might be. Every insect hopping in the grass and every winged thing flying in the air seemed shrilly shouting out to her, "Hello! Hello!"

Then she began and told him, stammeringly, about what she had been doing for 'Liza, gathering courage as she saw the approving look that lit his face as she continued.

"This is the loveliest thing you ever did," said he; and then they fell to work arranging the ways and means for delivering the gifts.

"We will go down to-morrow afternoon, about the time that we started to-day. I will speak to Dean to send his load, so it will arrive shortly after we do. Men are always at a disadvantage in such matters. They can't sew as women do, and raw material is n't half so acceptable or nice. Hello, there are some ox-eye daisies! The prettiest ones I have seen this summer. Wait a minute, and I'll get you some."

They had strayed as they exchanged their serious talk and light badinage, and while Sadie rehearsed her secret concerning 'Liza,

to some little distance from the house which they had left. The daisies were in an uncultivated field, separated from the lane by a rail fence, which Mr. Bartlett went over with much athletic grace. He wandered in among a tangle of wild flowers, breaking off first one and then another, and abandoning them for prettier ones ahead of him (they always look prettier just ahead), until he had gone some distance into the wild inclosure thus overgrown.

Sadie looked after him for a moment, and then turned her eyes on the features of the scenery about her, shading them from the sun, low down in the west, yet still sending back his javelins of fire, with Aunt Harriet's red fan. How beautiful the world of nature was! How bountifully, through sound and vision, did it minister to man!

A sharp reproach pierced her with the thought that her presumptuous philosophy had denied its grandeur, and ignored the debt owed to these ministrations by man's spiritual life. Why, even now the play of leaves in the soft wind, the greenness of the grass beneath her feet, the aroma of flowers, scent of vines, and chirp of insect life about her, made, as Francis had said, "some part of her nature

thrill and tremble." Ah! how it thrilled and trembled-its higher, better part, in which the mind and the emotions mingle and reach out, not to impossible ideals, but actual goods and graces, that, as souls expand, wear all the beauties of the ideal, with the added charms of truth, permanence, and immortality! And it was at this moment, when the delicate mechanism of her nature was responding, in a sweet, indefinable tumult, to these appeals from without, that there arose within her a strong, unconquerable repugnance to a marriage with George Langdon. Sadie had been at church on Sabbath-strange inconsistency!-and she remembered now how the minister had spoken of God as him "who desireth truth in the inward parts." Surely, then, he would condemn falsehood in the act. It came to her consciousness for the first time that such an act would carry with it a responsibility graver than even the wreck of her own life and George Langdon's; it would involve the basest of falsehood and perjury.

What had seemed to her up to this time only as a haven of rest, a way out of troubles and entanglements, an escape and refuge from her own audacious mistakes, now loomed before her as a danger to be avoided, an evil to be shunned—something to flee from, as from pestilence and death.

Some ward had turned in the lock of her heart, some door had slightly stirred upon its hitherto moveless hinges. She had caught one glimpse of her own possible powers of feeling; and as she stood thus, shading her eyes and looking, with a half smile, steadily before her, the fate of this luckless young man, in so far as it was in any wise connected with hopes concerning her, was sealed.

Just at the corner of this weed-grown lot wherein Francis was gathering an ambitious bouquet—like the gaudy pretensions, alas! of a large class of human beings, and as strong a tendency toward early wilting—another little lane or foot-path intersected with this broader one in which Miss Spencer was standing.

Two or three cows came leisurely around this corner, and strolled up the incline in her direction. At the first sight of her, the leading cow stopped suddenly, and took a more prolonged view. This action the second one imitated; and the third also came to a halt of indecision. This pantomime was terminated by a bolt of the rear animal, which urged the entire trio past her in a sort of organic whirlwind.

Miss Spencer was afraid of cows. Her heart made a sudden leap into her throat. As she looked after them, thankful that they had "stood not upon the order of their going, but gone at once," she did not at the moment notice that a short-horn bull, closely followed by a man on horseback, with a long, heavy black whip in his hand, had also turned the bend immediately in their rear. The first intimation she had of this was the sound of a snorting and bellowing close at hand. She turned her head just in time to see the animal pause and lower his own, as if about to make an attack upon her.

At this moment she heard Francis's footsteps running across the field behind her, and a peremptory voice cried out, "Throw down that fan!"

This order was unnecessary. Had her immortal soul been at stake, she could not have moved. In the meantime the man on horseback made a quick strategic movement, putting himself and horse between her and the bull, and added, as a convincing clause of prohibitory nature, a resonant swing of the lash across his flank. Borne by the urgency of both horse and whip entirely beyond the object of his momentary rage, the fury of Taurus

took new direction, and, still bellowing, he rushed on to overtake the departed cows.

Francis vaulted over the fence. He looked whiter than the frightened girl before him.

"Hi, there! You!" called he to the disreputable-looking hero of the whip.

The hero pulled up, with a "Wha' d' ye want?"

"Are those John Carey's cattle?"

"Ya-as."

"Is that the bull that killed Jock Rollins's blooded colt yesterday?"

"The very critter. He's a tough un, he is."

"Well, his owner will have a tough price to pay for that colt, too. If that brute had come an inch nearer this young lady, I'd have made this part of the world too hot to hold John Carey, and you can tell him that from me. You call at my office at nine o'clock to-morrow morning—Francis Bartlett's, Main Street, in town, and get some money."

The man grinned, and remarking that he "could bet his bottom dollar on that," spurred on his horse to catch up with his responsible charge. After ruminating over the affair for a few moments, he ejected a stream of tobaccojuice from his filthy mouth, and concluded

his cogitations with, "I reckon he's fond o' that gal."

Francis drew a long breath, and turned to Sadie. She was trembling like the leaves of a "quaking asp" tree when the lightest breath of air sets them in motion on their slender petioles. He took her hand in his own, which was cold. He tried to speak lightly:

"He was charging the Jabberwok."

Her answering smile was very faint. He must use heroic treatment, that was very evident.

"By way of an idea," said he, nodding his head in the direction of the cause of her fright, "he is a very robust specimen why did you not remember Mrs. Eddy's declaration that 'our bodies are where we think them,' and that our psychical influence can render them invulnerable? Follow me for a moment, Sadie. The animal is only an idea; ergo, he is not here. You are where you think yourself; so, think yourself somewhere else and you are not here. But, even at the worst, if the bull and you are both here, why you have only to exercise the influence of the psychical part of you over the part expressing the divine and human idea of you, and, presto! here you are, more invulnerable than Achilles." She raised her head proudly, and the color came back into her cheek.

"You should not waste such brilliant professional work outside the court-house," said she, sarcastically

"O well," thought he, half mockingly, "when a woman gets to running after a willo'-the-wisp like this, there is no getting on with her ten minutes at a time without a collision. I wish that brute had been in Jericho!"

So, together, scarcely speaking, they turned back and retraced the steps they had taken with joy and laughter in the soft June twilight.

Снартев ХІ.

FTER reaching home, Miss Spencer went directly to her own room. waited for no deliberation, the counsel of no sober second thought, which often nullifies the hasty resolution. She went immediately to her writing-desk, and, sitting down, wrote the answer for which George Langdon had been waiting for a week. Not exactly the answer he had been expecting, or which she had thought to give; but she drew a long breath of utter and exquisite relief when its direct, unequivocal meaning had made itself clear upon paper She hurried out secretly, and posted it herself, and went back to the house again, without her absence having been noticed.

'I suppose I have done wrong with regard to him," muttered she; 'but if so, it is of a piece with all the rest of my follies and mistakes, and I can repent them all together."

But for all that, Sadie's sleep was broken that night by a knowledge of the pain she was giving to a man who, if she did not love him, she knew loved her very truly. By the time she and Francis Bartlett were on their way to see little 'Liza the next day, with Caroline's comfort and pillows and Sadie's lingerie in the carriage, and with the load of furnishing goods a little way behind them, George Langdon had left the town, disappointed and sore at heart, but excusing her wherein she most blamed herself—for ever having encouraged his hopes.

He knew that his persistence alone had won this encouragement, such as it was.

Francis saw that she was pensive, and that a shadow lay upon her spirits. He knew of Langdon's departure, but he was not aware of what had brought it about; so to that he attributed this shade of sadness, which, paradoxically speaking, was truth, yet not the truth.

He wondered in his perplexity what the tie between them might be, which caused her to be sad at his going, when a word from her would without doubt have caused him to remain.

Upon their arrival at the Epperts', they were met by Josiah, who was, as on the former occasion, sitting at the open door, with every evidence of obsequious delight.

In all Josiah's life and knowledge of

human beings, he had never before met a man who, knowing him for what he was and having no illusions that he was "worthy," had, out of pure Christian charity and generic love of his kind, extended to him so hearty and earnest a helping hand, without sermon or tract or pledge in it—just letting its deeds speak in their own eloquent way.

And they had spoken. For even a man who occasionally steals chickens and habitually drinks whisky, may have a conscience, after all, if he will but stop stealing and drinking long enough to let it be heard.

Josiah had stopped, perforce. Physical disability had debarred him from the one pursuit, and pecuniary embarrassment had materially lessened his facilities for following the other; and in this interval of comparative decency, the man had often thought to himself that it might be a good thing for him to abandon both.

Some people may object, that repentance of this sort can not be genuine; but I believe, as a general rule, it has to be made hard for mankind to do wrong, before they do right from choice.

Even David, who was a man "after God's own heart," declares: "Before I was afflicted,

I went astray; but now have I kept thy word."

Afflictions, both of body and spirit, we know, have a bracing, tonic effect upon the character, like a draught from a quassia-cup. They are irritative stimulants to the better qualities of the nature; but, like quinine, they are bitter to take.

"I 'low'd we was n't goin' ter see you out yere no more," said he, rising up with a vigor that surprised his visitors, in view of his recent incapacity to make use of his limbs, and hobbling on his stick to the carriage.

"Why, Joe, you're improving!" said the young lawyer.

"Improvin'! Well, now ye're shoutin'! Ef I ain't, I sh'd like ter know who is. Hitch yer hawse ter that tree, sir, and help the young 'ooman out. It's astonishin', now, how much better doctor old Butterworth is, when he's pintedly sure of gittin' what's comin' to him. Don't have ter fool no time away askin' who's responsible this time. That's jest it. He's a-makin' the rheumatiz git up an' git. Hope I see you well, Miss? Yes, the old 'ooman's fair ter middlin'; an' 'Liza—why 'Liza's pearter'n I've seen 'er sence she got down in bed. Don't hafter

set up'n cough like she use' ter in the night. Butterworth gives her somethin' that eases her up consid'able. But there's the old 'ooman a-waitin' in the door. Walk right in. You need n't aige a-past this time. He! he! he!"

Francis looked at Sadie at the mention of the doctor, but she seemed perfectly oblivious, as she reached into the carriage for parcels with which to load him down.

Mrs. Eppert met them at the door, apparently in doubt what course to pursue, or what would be said and done by the young lady, when she discovered that 'Liza had been given over by her father and Mr. Bartlett to a doctor's care—one of those invidious creatures supposed by Christian Scientists to go up and down and around and about, seeking whom they may devour.

Not that this was the form of her thought, only its gist.

But Sadie met her easily and pleasantly, and passed at once into 'Liza's room, to which she afterward admitted Mr. Bartlett, bringing the things made for the child's use.

"I'm right glad ter see ye—both of ye. I like ye—both of ye! Marm said 't mebbe ye would n't come back no more, but I

knowed better; 'cause ye said ye would, an' ye did."

This was little 'Liza's greeting, as she put out her attenuated hands to them, and smiled a sweet, pathetic smile, that emphasized the hollows in her cheeks, and seemed to accentuate the shadows of the deep purple rings under her eyes.

"I am glad you believe in us, dear, and I have brought you something in answer to your faith in me. Guess what it is."

"I wan' ter tell ye sumpin first, afore you give me anything. I don't want ter act no wrong story. I'm takin' doctor's stuff ev'ry day—three'n four times a day. An' ev'ry three'n four days, he comes ter see me hisself, an' puts some kind er glass thing under my tongue, an' takes out his watch when he feels my wrist, an' asks me lots er questions 'bout how I feel. An' I ain't goin' ter tell yer nothin' but the truth—I feel heaps better! You ain't mad at me, are ye? 'Cause it's orful when you feel like I use' ter, 'n ye hain't got nothin' to take."

Sadie stooped down and kissed her, with tears in her eyes.

"No, child, I'm not angry with you. I'm glad you are feeling so much better. Shall

we turn the gentleman out, while I show you what I have brought?"

The child looked from one conscious face to the other.

"If you'll let him in ergin."

"O, he shall come in. Now, Mr. Bartlett, we will call you when you are wanted. Consider yourself dismissed."

The young man, smiling, retired from the room.

In about a minute afterward, they heard a shrill cry of delight from 'Liza.

"O, pap! marm! childern! Come quick!
O, come quick!"

In a minute more they were inside the room, the "childern" being represented by the six-year-old, still known to his fond mother as "Baby." The others had shaken his society and played hookey.

'Liza was sitting up in bed, with her arms full of dainty garments, and the remainder of them scattered on the foot of the bed and about the room.

"Ain't they pretty, marm? Aint they, pap? An'she giv' 'em all—ev'ry one of 'em—to me. I think she's a' nangel. Nobody never done nothin' like this ter me afore; an' she would n't if she warn't a' nangel."

Josiah acted as if he was stricken dumb; but then, as Francis told Sadie afterward, "Joe always was a little dumb."

Mrs. Eppert came nearer to concentrating her gaze than the visitors had ever before seen her; and then she turned it from the gifts to the giver, with the remark:

"Well, if this ain't the beatin'est thing I ever seen!"

"Baby" stood with mouth and eyes wide open, until it occurred to him that he had not been remembered, and the howling which ensued could only be quieted by some loose change from the gentleman's pocket.

Just then there was a knock with a whiphandle on the outside door of the house. Josiah hobbled out to receive the unexpected guest, and immediately called out:

"Polly! Polly! Come yere! There must be a mistake of some kind. It must be Christmas. Here's old Santy, by gum! loaded plum down."

Polly made quick time in response to this call; and there was heard floating backward, in accents of increasing astonishment, the refrain that "this was the beatin'est thing she ever seen."

Sadie smiled and motioned Francis away.

Then she shut and fastened the door with the old-fashioned hasp upon it, and proceeded to make the little girl's scanty sick toilet. But, first of all, she asked her:

"'Liza, have you forgiven me for not wetting that cloth and putting it on your head?"

"Forgive you? Why, I 'low you don't never need nobody to forgive you. You're good as Sunday-school teacher, and a 'nuff sight prettier. 'N' I like pretty things; an' I like you."

The child held her breath in an awestricken way, as the ribbon in the little vest was tied about her shoulders, and the soft cambric gown, with its valenciennes ruffles, was placed over it. But her admiration could not be restrained when the little, white bedshoes, with the pink dahlia rosettes, were put upon her feet.

"Why, that's like Cind'rella. I heerd about her an' her fairy godmother. Them Burnett children to the Aldershotts', las' summer, had a book about her. Ain't you my godmother? You told me God 'n' good meant all the same, an' I know ye're good. But I do n't want the clock ter strike twelve this time. I want this ter stay certain true. Will the clock strike?"

As the child asked this, she looked up anxiously into the fairy godmother's face.

"I don't want it all ter turn ter rags 'n lose my slippers."

"Yes, 'Liza, the clock will strike—some day; it will strike twelve for you; but your pretty things won't 'all turn to rags.' You will wear more beautiful garments then, white as snow, and a crown that will glitter like the stars; and you will be with Jesus when the clock strikes twelve."

'Liza smiled. "I don't mind that. I like Him."

Then Sadie rolled the little girl in the counterpane, and unfastened the door.

"Now, Mr. Bartlett, I am coming out to sit in the rocking-chair, and you shall bring 'Liza and put her in my arms,' called she.

After she had established herself in the chair, and 'Liza had been put upon her lap, the child said:

"I do n't b'leeve I can set up. Why do n't I stay in bed?"

"Lean your head down against my shoulder, and I will rock you; and I am going to tie this handkerchief over your eyes for a little while. Then we will see what we shall find when you open them."

'Liza submitted obediently. Sadie could see that the excitement had wearied her, and she was almost ready to go to sleep. So she was glad, after a little tramping in and out of feet that wore heavy boots, and belonged to Mr. Dean's delivery man, to take off the blindfolding handkerchief, and give the child to Francis to carry back into the bedroom.

Poor 'Liza! The little brass bedstead and beautiful bed, and the entire arrangement of the hitherto plain, bare little room was too much for her. When she was put down on the snowy pillows, her excitement overmastered her, and she began to cry.

"Sho, now, do n't! I would n't, now, 'Lizy, ef I was you," said Josiah, drawing the back of his yellow hand across his eyes. And Polly's eyes were so moist that it took several rods off the distance of their glance.

"She can't help it, Josiah," said she; "it's so beatin'; and it seems like 't was so."

"Well, Polly, if these yere senses is lyin' this time, I b'leeve I like lies. Don't give me no sort of truth if this yere is lies."

But while 'Liza was sobbing, Francis had gone out suddenly, and returned with something in his arms, which he put into hers, and closed them over it.

"Are you too big a girl for that?" asked he. She took her face out of the pillow, and looked.

"O! O!! O!!!" cried she, in a crescendo of ecstasy.

It was a large wax doll, with hair that curled, clothes that would take off, beautiful yellow-glass ear-rings in its ears, and O, wonder of wonders! Francis showed her how to pull a wire and make it say "Mamma," and "Papa."

The tears were all dried now; but Sadie banished all the people from the room, and shut out the light with the new green curtains.

Then she looked at the bottle by the bedside, and found out, by the label and by questioning, that it was time for another dose, which she promptly, with a determined and seemingly satisfactory air, administered.

And soon the child was sound asleep, with the precious doll clasped tightly to her bosom.

Miss Spencer went out, and softly closed the door.

Everybody can not do things upon so agreeable a scale as it had pleased these friends of ours to do for 'Liza; but how much might be accomplished in this world to ameliorate the condition of the poor, the sick, and

the sorrowful, if people had in them more of that spirit which leads to a desire to do what they are able to effect, be it little or much! Which of us remembers that "the field is the world," and "the reapers are the angels;" that we pass this way but once, and must sow as we journey, if aught of ours is to be gathered when they "put in the sickle and reap?"

CHAPTER XII.

making ready to leave, when a spring-wagon was drawn up in front of the house, convoyed by a very restless roan steed, which objected to stopping. Its driver persuaded it, however, by vigorous cries of "Whoa, there!" "What're you about, now?" "Stand still, I tell you!" and various other admonitions of like nature, while a stout lady climbed out backwards, with considerable display of pudgy ankles in white stockings above old-fashioned Congress gaiters.

Sadie flushed a little as she looked at her, and said, in a low tone, to Francis:

"I wish we had gotten away."

"I don't know," was the equally low reply. "I think Joe may need me to undertake his defense. I've done it under circumstances less to his credit, I must say."

No comment was made upon this remark, and both of them watched the new-comer, as, having gotten safely on terra firma, she walked heavily and laboriously into the house, while her companion drove away.

The lady's face was ruddy with the heat, and her superfluous weight, as she climbed from the step of the high-bodied wagon, seemed to have inconvenienced and overexerted her.

Joe did not arise to welcome her, as was his custom with visitors more anxiously desired. He waited for Polly, and even Polly's motion was a little reluctant. To use the language of the thought in her mind—"Here was a pretty kittle of fish!"

But even Polly, it appeared, had not the slightest idea of being browbeaten, or sat upon, under her own vine and fig-tree. Her glance went very wide of the mark, and her manner was quite as distant.

"Why, how d' ye do, Mis's Morris?" said she, setting that lady a chair, with very indifferent courtesy.

Mrs. Morris felt the change in the atmosphere, and looked about for the cause; but seemed reassured when her eye rested upon Miss Spencer, whom she rushed forward to and kissed with much *empressment*.

"Well, now, it's good to see you here. You've been keeping your promise to me, I know." Then, to Mrs. Eppert: "I know 'Liza feels better. I've been giving her close

attention all the while I was away. But I am glad to see that Miss Spencer has been a present help to you. Entertaining is one of the best forms of healing. It gives the mind something pleasant to think about. Dear 'Liza! What a privilege she has enjoyed in having so earnest and enthusiastic a healer with her! And you, Miss Spencer—I know you have enjoyed watching that 'refining process by which the body becomes the blended possession of the soul, and every seeming organ of the body is gradually being dovetailed into its perfect thought.'"

A red spot came out upon Sadie's cheeks; but she did not reply to this rhodomontade, except to ask the speaker when she had returned.

Was it possible she had talked such stuff as this herself, and considered it intelligent? How many days had it been since she had, in sheer desperation, and before Francis too, talked of holding Joe—Joe!—"to his right of soul-growth?" And what had, since then, caused her to see the absurdity of it with such overwhelming distinctness?

"Why, if I am not mistaken, this is Mr. Bartlett?" remarked Mrs. Morris, rising, and holding out her hand to the young man.

"Excuse my short-sightedness. I left my glasses in my other dress-pocket."

Mr. Bartlett signified his willingness to excuse it, and Mrs. Morris, with much seeming satisfaction, sat down again.

She was a woman with a very straight back and a full, high bust, which gave her, as she sat, the appearance of a stuffed owl on a perch.

She wore a hot-looking, somewhat frayed, and shiny, black gros-grain silk, mustard-colored cotton gloves, and a bonnet of such old-fashioned, flaring amplitude that it testified to more years on the part of its wearer than the record in the family Bible.

After Mrs. Morris had seated herself, there ensued a few moments of frosty silence, which she broke by asking to see 'Liza. No one answered for a half-minute, after which Josiah cleared his throat, and blurted out the fact that "Butterworth was a-tendin' 'Lizy."

This information, for a brief period, seemed to take away Mrs. Morris's breath; but, regaining it, she turned on Mrs. Eppert, saying:

"I am surprised—at you!"

Mrs. Eppert proved herself equal to the occasion.

"You don't have no call to be. I reckon Josiah has a right ter do what he pleases erbout his own young 'uns. Not but what 'Liza's the same's my own flesh an' blood. I b'leeve in Chrischen healin' by them as can heal; but 'Liza was n't gettin' no better, an' this gentleman present is footin' the expenses for Butterworth."

"But, my dear woman, it is so debasing—this pandering to a belief in evil and sickness and death, this lowering the standard of spiritual growth and development. The increase in the number of physicians is absolutely startling, and it is all owing to the cultivation of the idea that this seeming body, which is the lowest grade of existence, is the real ego."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Bartlett, in an interested manner, literally taking the lady off Mrs. Eppert's hands.

"Yes, sir; it is so. No wonder the pulpits teach that man was made out of the dust of the earth, when our groveling ideas insist so strenuously upon holding him to this earth level."

"What would you suggest?" asked he suavely.

"Why, I would have him arise-shine."

"Alı !"

"I want him to give up his belief in sin, evil, and death."

"Then you don't believe in death?"

"No, sir."

"Is your husband living?"

"Not—not in this sphere, sir. But nothing is lost to life when this animal organism decays."

"Supposing, now, that we do not quarrel as to terms, but come to an understanding on some neutral ground. You think 'Liza can not die, unless she lets herself, or those around her let themselves, believe in such a possibility."

"Certainly I think so. Of course."

"It is true that nothing essential to the spirit's existence 'is lost to life' when the body dies; but it is 'Liza's body, and not her spirit, that we are trying to preserve as long as possible by the use of medicines."

"But my dear sir, medicines are not adequate."

"Is entertaining?"

"It is very useful."

"But, it did not seem to be particularly useful in this case. Under your method, first of entertaining and then of absent treatment, so called, 'Liza grew worse every day. Her fever was higher, her cough more distressing, and her days and nights were becoming more and more terrible. Dr. Butterworth has relieved the most aggravated forms of all her symptoms. Now, in favor of which system lies the preponderance of evidence? Nobody here argues or believes that there is danger of any death for her but that of the body; but a few more weeks of such inhuman neglect as that authorized by the Christian Science system, and very few, would have utterly destroyed the life of that."

"O, it is the old story," said Mrs. Morris, with a gesture of contempt, "the old story. All those symptoms in 'Liza did not prove that she was not getting well—not at all. Why, as one of our writers has said, 'the very treatment itself might serve to cause a little revolution in the system.'"

"Granted. The only difficulty was," said he, with a sort of grim humor, "that the revolution was in the wrong direction. Every revolution of your system of treatment brought her that much nearer the grave."

"But can't you see, Mr. Bartlett, that inert matter can not suffer or have ailments? Life is God's gift, and can not even be sick. The 158

great and only trouble lies in the fact of a lack of harmony in the patient. If harmony were there, it would first have to be displaced before pain could intrude itself."

"I see that you people get your arguments wofully mixed. You say life can not suffer or be sick. You admit that the body has life; that this life is from God, the source of all harmony; that this harmony pervades everything to the extent that there can be no evil; and yet that it is the actual presence of evil which makes the sickness possible. The possibility of living on eternally, even in this 'expression of God's idea' of us, the flesh, you boldly declare, if men will but establish themselves on that assertion as an absolute and unchangeable truth; and then you go and bury your own dead just the same as other people do, although you do it affirming that there is no death caused by sickness; no evil, the result of inharmony, that brought the sickness; and that though inharmony of some kind must have existed somewhere to have produced this funeral, God's harmony pervades everything at all times, and no two things can occupy the same space at the same time. Now, what do you think of an argument like that?"

"I think that you do not understand."

"Well, Mrs. Morris, I claim to have average intelligence, and have been making something of a study of this philosophy in my own way. A lawyer has to be trained to analyze evidence—to weigh it and pronounce upon its reasonableness—and if I am too obtuse to understand these mysticisms (and people of my mental status), how is the vast body of those yet lower in the mental scale to be able to apply such a religion to its crying needs?"

"They do n't reason; they simply exercise faith."

"The time has gone by, Mrs. Morris, in ecclesiastical history, when any arbitrary proclamation of this nature finds a royal road to recognition in the unquestioning belief of the masses. A doctrine now, be it true or false, must give a weighty reason for its own existence and propulsion, because there now exists a higher standard of general intelligence, which demands a practical faith. And while I admit that, after reason has gone to the length of its tether, faith, taking wings, must still soar far above it, reason must be able to follow that flight with indorsement of the purpose and consideration that gave rise to it."

"For the matter of that, what you call the Christian religion has its very pronounced mysteries," said she.

"Admitted. But they appear only when we leave the realm of the outer actualities, and begin to deal with the purely spiritualjust as a balloon gets into the clouds when it rises and leaves the earth behind. But your religion has no basis of actuality. It begins, continues, and ends in the clouds. Every man knows within himself that he exists; and when you summon him to a Barmecide feast which is to feed him upon his own nonentity, he is very likely to go away hungry. God has made every human being an angle of reflection, from which is ever echoed and reechoed his own sublime declaration, 'I am.' To return, however, to the question of life and its continuity, I shall refer you to what I consider infallible proof that no amount of harmonizing, or planting the feet on the assertion that it is indestructible, will do away with. I find it in the Bible. You Christian Scientists go foraging through the Bible, picking up what you like and weaving it into your fantasies, and leaving the remainder. You don't carry away with you the assertion David made in the nineteenth Psalm, that a

man's life is measured out to him by years; that the average number is threescore and ten; that it may be more or less; but that there is in that vicinity a terminal point marking the end of the route. Let me see a Christian Scientist who can keep a man from growing old—from reaching the summit of his powers, and from thence beginning to decline. O, Mrs. Morris, why don't some of you go about preventing the mournful condition of old age?"

The lady sat very straight and stiff, with a flush of embarrassment on her cheek, unable to reply.

"I understand you have just buried your father," he said. "I am sorry to hear it."

"Yes," said she, taking out her handkerchief to wipe away a genuine tear.

"Was he dead?"

She paused, with the handkerchief halfway to her eyes, and glared at him.

"If faith in a candidate for healing is not necessary, I can not understand why the inner illumination possessed by a healer who knows that sickness, death, and evil do not exist, should not be sufficient to enable such healer to raise the dead—as we consider them."

He got up and walked the floor excitedly.

"If I had been you, and known such a thing as that, he should not have been buried. I would have defied the physician, dismissed the undertaker, and driven away the healthofficer. I would not have suffered my living father to have been buried under the ground. Why did you not stand by your colors, and cry it out from the house-top—this wonderful truth that ought to revolutionize the world? Unless you are subscribing to a falsehood, every grave that was ever dug holds in cruel imprisonment some case of suspended, or seemingly suspended, animation; and Tanner's proposed experiment of being buried a few months, with his tongue turned back into his throat, would have been nothing new under the sun."

"I 'low 't would be a nuff sight better, if you 'll excuse me, sir, and ladies, for sayin' so, ef lots er tongues was turned back inter throats and stayed there," interrupted Josiah.

This acted as a slight diversion, enabling Mrs. Morris to regain composure, glide rapidly away from the subject of Death, and branch out upon that of Evil:

"I think it is so *beau*tiful to feel that there is no evil. Sometimes it comes over me with such peculiar force! Last night it was so

sweetly impressed upon me, as I was lying in bed, that I said, aloud: 'Mother, there is no evil!'"

"Is your mother dead, madam?"

"No, sir! She still resides in the State of New York. But, as I was saying, it is a very precious belief. I teach my little boy that there is no evil, and it makes him fearless. He climbs everywhere. He is n't afraid of anything."

"But, supposing he falls out of a tree some day, and breaks his arm—what then?"

"Why, he won't know no better'n to think what a norful liar his marm must be!" again interrupted Josiah.

Mrs. Morris could not leave the house in dudgeon until Mr. Grim, who was collecting money on a note at a house further away down on "the valley pike," returned for her; so she ignored this remark entirely.

"Do you healers set bones by 'entertaining?" continued Francis.

"Well, no; not yet!" reluctantly answered she. "We hope to, before long."

"Well, in the suppositional case referred to—if your little boy should break an arm or a leg—what would you do? Let it go unset, and lose the arm or leg; or, call in one of

those doctors, the increase in whose numbers is so startling?"

Mrs. Morris looked appealingly towards Sadie; but this young lady was fastening and unfastening the strap of her parasol, and seemed much absorbed in the operation. She did not rally to the assistance of her sister in the faith, as might reasonably have been expected, and Mrs. Morris, becoming suddenly more reticent, replied that there was "no use in arguing upon a suppositional case."

"But accidents of this character occur, somewhere, every day. What shall we do with this great army of people with broken bones, until such time as you can"—here he glanced swiftly and guiltily at Sadie—"succeed in 'holding them to their right of soulgrowth,' and make 'every seeming organ of the body dovetail into the soul's perfect thought?""

"Man must, until then, suffer the unpleasant results of his unfaith, I suppose," replied she, feebly.

"Why must he?" asked Francis. "If his 'unfaith,' as you call it, prevents him from moving a broken limb and calling it whole—in obedience to the orders of an entertainer who is trying to 'hold him to his right of

soul-growth'—what prevents him from calling in a physician, who has scientific knowledge, and having it set?"

Mrs. Morris was vainly casting about for a reply, when Mrs. Eppert, gazing into space, declared:

"I make one exception ter the b'leef that there ain't no evil."

"What is that?" asked Mr. Bartlett.

"Licker!" said she, placidly; while Josiah, who was sitting near the door, had sudden business outside.

"I am afraid, Mrs. Morris," said Mr. Bartlett, in a gentle, insinuating voice, "that we do not reckon from the same data. I don't know what your sacred book may be-whether it is called 'Ontology,' 'Theosophy,' or what not-but it can not be the Bible; for that, in the very beginning, speaks of a tree of the 'knowledge of good and evil,' which caused our progenitors some considerable embarrassment. And your term 'Christian,' regarding your 'science,' must refer to some other Christ—'not a person, but a principle'—of whom I know nothing. Our Christ taught his disciples to pray: 'Deliver us from evil.' Our Christ himself prayed to his Father, saying he asked not that his disciples should be

taken out of the world, but that he would 'keep them from the evil.' I understand where you get your 'All-God, all-good.' It comes from the Pantheistic belief that there is no God, excepting the combined laws and forces of the universe, whose general character is supposed to be good. It comes from a modern rehabilitation of the philosophy of Plato. It comes from Hindustan, and has very much to do with that individual who is represented sitting cross-legged on his foot, with his ears turned down. Your God-good, good-God, is accounted for; but where do you get your Christ? He is a graft—an interpolation. Christians do not allow your process of healing, which comes from an entirely different source of faith and belief-demonology, for aught I know-to have anything in common with the faith-cures of Scripture."

Mrs. Morris had gotten far beyond her depth. Like many another, she had never considered, until the matter was thus set before her, the points of variance between "Christian Science" doctrine and the Bible, which she was not yet fully prepared to abjure. Sure enough, out of this "old theology," whence did Christ come?

"It may be," said she, lamely, "that that

name has been attached to this power of healing on account of the similarity of the evidences found in the cures."

"They are very dissimilar. Christ said to the sick and the palsied and the dead: 'Arise! walk!' and they arose, and walked. His disciples made instantaneous cures. They did not go day by day to use magnetism, hypnotism, or the influence of mind over mind and matter, upon patients, for weeks, sometimes months, before proclaiming a cure; and then have it often result, at best, in but a partial one. They were not so elusive in their methods, either. They did not profess to do any dovetailing of seeming body and perfect soul thought. They said: 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth,' do ye thus and so. Do you say that?"

"I never argue against prejudice," protested Mrs. Morris.

Mr. Bartlett smiled faintly. The smile stung and nettled his vis-a-vis. She had seen it, in spite of the absence of her glasses.

"One question more, Mrs. Morris, if you please."

"Certainly, sir!"

"Well, then, what is to become of the moral restraints belonging to society and the world, if the doctrine of 'no evil' is to be taught? The chances are that your boy may climb a tree, and not fall from its branches; but if permitted to choose evil associations, under the plea that there is no evil, he can not but be corrupted. What about that? If all is good, you have no right to restrain his choice of different varieties of good."

Mrs. Morris replied that "Johnny naturally chose the best; if he did n't, she should regulate him."

"May I ask if your former treatment of 'Liza laid claim to as much as that of some of your leaders? I refer to a statement made in the -teenth edition of a work by one of your most prominent teachers. I came across it accidentally, in a very hasty search for some of your kind of 'truth.' She says she has 'often made new lung-tissue.' Is that your way of curing lung disease?"

"Materially the same," said she, hastily.

"But"—and Mr. Bartlett straightened himself in his chair, and transfixed her with a steady gaze-"don't you know that such a thing was never done since the world stood, unless it might have been by Christ, and if so, we have no record of it?"

"No, sir, I do not know it."

"Do you know that it has? If so, how do you know? How do you know, when your patients say they are cured, that they are so? May not their unreliable senses, and yours, and those of every one who sees them apparently restored, be in collusion, proclaiming a gigantic lie? You have discredited the truth and honor of the senses; how, then, are you going to be governed by their testimony in so important a matter as this?"

Mrs. Morris wriggled on her chair a moment, and then gave up the argument by saying:

"As we fail to understand each other, perhaps this talk may not be very profitable."

She then turned to Josiah, who had again ventured inside the door, and said:

"I intended to make no charges for 'Liza's treatments; but since you have shown yourself so ungrateful for favors received, and have taken her from me to put her into hands that are always ready for fees, I will send in my bill, which you can pay when you get able to do so."

"I didn't never make no bargain with you erbout 'Liza, marm. Ef Polly did, Polly's the one ter look to," said Joe.

"It's quite astonishing," said Francis, med-

itatively, looking at the ceiling, "how much stress 'Christian healers' lay on this seeming money. It makes one feel almost as if they fancied that it actually existed, and believed in it as an agent for the preservation of their apparent bodies from obvious death. It really—yes, it really is the one bond of relationship that makes all methods of modern cure akin. If I understand the matter properly, you claim that the greater the personal purity and spirituality possessed by a healer, the more perfect and complete will be the cures effected."

Mrs. Morris glowered at him, and did not reply.

"Now, I suppose it was largely so with Christ's disciples. Some of them, at any rate, were leaders. But I observe one great difference between your method and theirs, which you may not have thought about. When money was offered to Peter by the sorcerer for the purchase of the laying on of hands, he replied: 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.' Yet you Christian Scientists sell this 'pervasive harmony,' which is a direct attribute of the Allgood, as if it came by the pound, and stood

labeled, in a glass jar, on the shelf of a drugstore."

"But we must live!" burst forth Mrs. Morris reluctantly, in self-defense.

"Certainly, certainly. I appreciate the difficulty—because you can not die!"

Luckily for Mrs. Morris, at that moment Mr. Grim and the restive roan dashed up to the door, and he called out:

"Hurr' up, Mis's Morris; hurr' up! This horse won't stand!"

She did not pause for lengthened adieus, but bustled out and climbed into the wagon, thankful that Mr. Grim, like a good fairy, had arrived to spirit her away from her merciless tormenter.

CHAPTER XIII.

ARAH SPENCER, it is not too much to say, was troubled to the very depths of her soul. Surely, when she had drifted into the study of "Christian Science," and later into its promulgation as a teacher and the practice of it as a "healer," she had done so with eyes "holden," that she should not see whither it led, nor yet the responsibilities to which it committed her.

Troubled she indeed had been, to an uncomfortable degree, after hearing Francis's first exegetical discourse upon the subject. Out of that trouble, in fact, had first arisen, as a remorseful apparition, her philanthropic designs concerning 'Liza, toward whom she accused herself of hard-heartedness in refusing cold water. Out of it, also, had sprung a resolution to abandon her "practice" until she could thoroughly review her books of mysticism, and compare them with the Bible doctrines; and a determination never to take it up again if she found them so much at variance as he had declared. Then, too, she re-

solved, until such time, not to oppose the use of remedies in 'Liza's case or any other.

It was with a feeling like that with which the penitent of the cloistered cell presses the hair shirt to the sensitive flesh which it galls, that she had poured out those easing drops for the child. Not that she had ever before had a prejudice against medicines. It was only that enthusiasms are so contagious; and her strong love of the ideal in poetry and imagination needed not much fostering to develop a corresponding ideal in philosophy.

This idea of a pervasive Presence, so pure and permeating that it invested all things with its purity, and made the existence of evil impossible, had been beautiful to her at first sight. She had not thought of it, however, connected with the loss of individuality. She had not followed out this line of faith and reasoning to its legitimate conclusion—in the renunciation of Christ, in the "preaching of another gospel," and the many other points which Francis, in his speech, like the turning of a kaleidoscope, had presented, in different combinations, to her startled gaze. Was this faith, indeed, built on nebulous foundations?

She sat down, seriously, and asked herself what was the basis of her claim as a "healer."

Could she give any "lucid, substantial" account of the process by which even the little that she had accomplished, or thought she had accomplished, was done? Had she indeed any divine "illumination?" Was she "wise in the things of God?" Was it not, as Francis had said, all the exercise of the influence of the mind over mind and matter? Were people generally so truthful in their assertions, that statements of these miraculous cures without remedies could be implicitly relied upon? Was it not possible that many patients, liking the éclat of such a cure as a metaphysical or Christian Science one, yet feeling the need of positive curative treatment, might have secretly taken such, and acted and spoken an untruth? Were not the mental healers harsh, unreasonable, and often false, likewise, toward physicians who had been trained to lessen the sufferings of their fellow-men by harmless and useful means, which God himself had placed at their disposal? False because, while making claims to a superior source of knowledge, they, by their own confessions, were compelled to stop short of what medical practitioners could and did do? If the "illumination" of the Christian Scientist was from God, why should it be more difficult for him to illuminate sufficiently for the setting of a bone than the curing of a headache? Why did they show such contempt for services greater than they themselves were, by their own showing, able to render to humanity?

After long study of these questions, she would put them away, only to have them return again with tenfold persistency. They buzzed through her mind continually.

To be rid of them, she set herself resolutely to the finishing of her lecture, promised for the next public monthly meeting of the Christian Science Club, at the G. A. R. Hall.

By way of quieting her conscience, she said to herself that the two things had no connection; that in writing of the teachings of Gautama, she did not necessarily indorse his doctrines, although she was compelled to admit that there had been times during the last few weeks when she, too, had felt that to cease to exist would seem to be the highest good. She yearned for Nirvana. But, as she studied and wrote, she could not stifle the uneasy conviction that there was a great similarity between Christian Science and the dogmas which this brilliant Hindoo propagator of a new religion taught, cen-

turies before Christ, in the provinces of India.

Then she would throw down her pen, and go out and walk, declaring to herself that she would write on the lecture no further, only to return to it once more, remembering that she had promised, and must fulfill her engagement.

It was not until the afternoon of the evening when it was to be delivered that the concluding word was written upon the last page. Then, deliberately, in her boldest chirography, she traced beneath it the two words:

"THE END."

A resolution had been suddenly adopted, and by the way in which the green dominated the blue of her eyes, it seemed evident that it was made to be kept.

She did not go down to the supper-table that night. She had for days eaten but little, and her nights had been restless with lack of satisfying slumber.

We know of one of the factors which promoted this unhealthy, unhappy condition of body and mind; but there were others, likewise, a recognition of which she would not admit even to her own consciousness.

She often, surreptitiously, as one would

revert to some secret and shameful delight which it would be wrong to acknowledge openly, thought of that cold touch of Francis's on her hand, on the day when she had escaped a sudden danger.

She had, she knew, been guilty of that very deed which he had satirically, and in another connection, spoken of to Mrs. Morris—she had buried something which was yet alive, and had said to herself that now it was dead, and would trouble her no more.

But it had done what most corpses are unaccustomed to do—it had refused to lie quiet! It had many days been stirring under the rubbish of philosophy and theology and profitless erudition, which had formed the cairn of its sepulture—the structure which Youth always builds highest over bodies which give most unequivocal signs of a still lingering life.

What must Francis Bartlett think of her now—her arrogant assumptions, coupled with her ignorant and blundering mistakes? But, worst of all, what would he think of her tomorrow? To-morrow! Ah! it seemed to her there was nothing, anywhere, beyond tomorrow!

With a deep sigh, she laid down the fin-

ished manuscript, and began the preparation of her evening toilet.

There were sepia-tinted shadows under her eyes, and her cheeks had lost a little of their roundness.

She did not like the picture presented to her view, and hastened her dressing, to be rid of confronting it in the mirror.

Her black lace dress, though rich in texture, was plain enough in effect; and she hesitated a little when Nora came up, bringing her a cluster of white roses "from Mr. Francis," about fastening them in her corsage. But, then, what did it matter?

Mrs. Littlefield, the chairman of the meeting, called, in her carriage, to convey the lecturer to the hall. The cracked bell of the town-clock had sounded the last stroke of eight, when Francis Bartlett put on his hat, and followed in the same direction.

Towns, not yet grown to be cities, do indeed turn out surprising audiences to anything in the line of home talent. The hall, as on the evening of his return, was filled to overflowing; and again he took up his position in an open doorway. On this occasion the door was not the one at the extreme end of the hall, but opened from a corridor at the

side, not far from the platform. There were three of these doors, at equal distances from each other, along the side of the long, somewhat narrow apartment, and all of them were filled.

Mr. Bartlett did not, as he looked about and saw the concourse of eyes which filled the place, like to think that all of them were to be leveled at Sadie.

Mrs. Littlefield and Miss Spencer entered by a noiselessly swinging green door back of the platform, and sat down in two upholstered chairs. Sadie's was behind the reading-desk, on which was a glass of water and a bouquet of flowers. On a small table to the right, in front of Mrs. Littlefield, was the program for the evening, and a gavel, which the chairman, after a moment's consultation with the lecturer, took up, and, by means of rapping with it, called the meeting to order.

Mr. Charles Kridlinger, it was announced, would open the exercises with Scripture reading. Mr. Kridlinger was slender and pale, and wore eye-glasses. He selected a chapter containing the blindest and most unintelligible prophecies to be found between the two covers of the book, and read it in an emphatic and impressive way—as one who should say,

"Behold, now! To us have the mysteries of the ages been made plain."

*Then Miss Flora Hollister, in a becoming maize-colored gown, the waist of which had "blossomed in purple and red," went to the piano, on the back of which was the placard, "Kindly lent for this occasion by the firm of Hartstone & Wagner," and accompanied her voice thereon while she sang a beautiful and well-received song about the "Pure White Lily of the Soul."

Mrs. Littlefield, upon its conclusion, immediately introduced the lecturer, as the next issue of the *Weekly Item* stated, "in a few well-chosen words."

Francis scarcely knew what it was he had been expecting; but he knew that he was fright-fully disappointed when Sadie arose, and, laying her manuscript on the desk, proceeded, easily and gracefully with its delivery.

The subject-matter was, necessarily, a compilation, noticeably lacking in those touches of original thought which had displayed, to some extent, her range of ideas in the former one. But the language was her own, and the matter itself new to the greater number of her hearers, who seemed pleased, were attentive, and could not withhold a tribute of per-

sonal admiration to this tall, pale, beautiful young woman, so tastefully and unostentatiously clad, even to the knot of colorless flowers on her bosom. They all knew herat least by sight and hearsay. They were aware of the fact of her fortune and easy circumstances of life, and many of them considered it something brave and noble in her, thus situated, to take so decided a stand in religious matters, and, above all, visit and "treat" the sick poor without money and without price. It was a very well-disposed audience, that gave respectful hearing to her words.

When she had turned the last page, and finished her paper with a well-rounded, high-sounding period, she was uproariously applauded, although nothing in the subject seemed to call for such a demonstration. The audience was applauding her youth, beauty, and intelligence, and toadying, as it is the wont of human nature to do, to the reputation of wealth in which it has neither hope nor prospect of sharing.

In spite of his disapproval of the occasion of it all, Francis's heart went out in amicable forgiveness to those people, who, after having ogled Sadie, atoned for it by their applause. Mrs. Littlefield was getting ready to make some announcements, and a young girl in white was stationed at the piano for the rendering of the accompaniment to the doxology; but, to the surprise of all, the lecturer had not yet returned to her seat. The chairman looked at her inquiringly. A profound silence settled over the house, and every eye was upon her. She advanced from behind the stand, which was a little to one side of the center of the platform, and walked down to the very front of it.

"My friends," said she, "I thank you for your kind and interested attention this evening, and will detain you but a moment longer. I have resolved to renounce Christian Science here and now, and all doctrines in any way appertaining to it, as I have become convinced that one and all of them are in direct conflict with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the religion of Jesus Christ. I do this at this time because I feel it incumbent upon me to make the renunciation in as public and unequivocal a manner as I have before now advocated, taught, and professed to practice the same."

In a dead silence, still unbroken, she turned and walked, erect and stately, out at the swinging green door into the anteroom beyond.

Not all, nor indeed any but the lesser part of the audience, were of the Christian Science belief; and, at best, a public assembly is fickle in its approval of sentiments and opinions. There were also many orthodox believers in the hall; and as Sarah Spencer sank into a seat on the other side of that green door, cheer after cheer went up from the people whose presence she had just left.

She lifted her head and listened, a bright, restless color coming and going on her cheeks. She heard the canzonet of cheers followed by a storm of hisses.

The Scientists had rallied from their momentary stupefaction, and this was their verdict.

Снартка ХІУ.

S Sadie passed out by the swinging door, Francis Bartlett, whose heart was beating like a trip-hammer, turned, and made his way through a group that had crowded up uncomfortably close behind him, to witness the astounding dénouement which had just occurred. He had only a few feet to walk to reach a door leading into the anteroom which Sadie had entered.

There was but a ghostly glimmer of light in the room from the gas-jet, turned down to a small blue bead; but there was light enough for him to see her, as she sat with her face fallen in her hands, just as it had been borne downward by that hurricane of hisses.

He went up to her, and laid his hand upon her shoulder.

She looked up, a little wildly at first, then, recognizing him, she said, in a broken voice:

"O Frank, is it you? Take me home!"

"Yes, yes! Don't tremble so! No one is coming. Don't you hear Kridlinger? She has set him to exhorting. There, there! Sit still, while I bring your wraps!"

He strode over to a row of hooks upon the side of the wall, from one of which hung her long peasant-cloak, and over it, swung by its narrow ties, her little evening capote.

He came back with them, and as she arose, put them on her—awkwardly, as men do those things—looking a little doubtfully for the arm-holes in the thin shirred wrap, and getting the bonnet a trifle awry at first, but settling it into proper place with a firm yet gentle touch.

"Come, now!" said he, drawing her hand under his arm, and starting toward the door. She shrank back, timidly.

"O Frank! How can I? I can not pass those dreadful people in the hall!"

"No, no! You will not have to pass them. We will go down the other stairway."

Then he led her out, and almost carried her down the stairs, so weak and tremulous had she become when the stress of excitement and determination which had borne her so successfully through the ordeal of her public renunciation was over.

He looked up at the lighted windows of the hall, as they hurried along the sidewalk beneath them, and drew a long breath of relief and satisfaction. Surely, surely, there was something fine and noble and worthy in a nature great enough to rise so heroically to the courage of its convictions!

At the last she would not disappoint his hopes for her, however might result his hopes for himself. For, to this young man, who had been bent so determinedly upon self-sacrifice, the intrinsic value of the woman herself had at length outweighed the lesser worth of her possessions.

When they reached home, he took her up to her own door, and stood outside to hear the key turn in the lock after she had entered. No one should question or annoy her in these first hours of her humiliation and distress. This was no time for even reassurance or consolation. His intuition told him that, until the storm of pent-up feeling should have burst and spent its first passionate fury, neither one nor the other of these would avail.

His mother, anxious and curious, waylaid him in the lower hall with numberless inquiries. He felt like repelling them, one and all, but some answer he was compelled to give; so he told, in a few, straightforward words, without comment, what had occurred.

This duty complied with, he went out under the trees, and sat down on one of the little rustic benches, from which he could see Sadie's window. The shutters had not been closed, and a black, open square, without a glimmer of light, and only the ghostly sweep of curtains behind it, confronted his gaze.

He thought of her there, lying, face down perhaps, across the bed, in her lace gown-or it might be on the rug at its foot-giving vent to the first desperate heart-aching, heartbreaking sobs that her shielded womanhood had known. And the sorrows of her girlhood had long since been soothed away. Sadie in trouble—Sadie, battling alone with something magnified by her womanly fears into a veritable Abaddon, was terrible to him! The thought of that lovely cheek discolored with tears, that fair hair disordered and pushed aside with the abandon of grief, was insupportable to him. And in the realization which came to him then of how little we can do to save from sorrow those whom we love the most, and the cry, "Help her, O God!" which followed it, perhaps he breathed the truest prayer of all his life up to that moment.

The next day Sadie kept her room. No

answer came through the closed door to Francis's words of persuasion and entreaty. The damask-covered tray, with its Royal Worcester service from her own cabinet, and daintiest food from the household *cuisine*, stood untouched outside the threshold.

Toward the middle of the forenoon Francis went down to his office, and transacted some necessary business in a mechanical, perfunctory way. No one spoke to him of the event of the evening before. There was something forbidding in his mien.

Just at the dinner hour there was a pull at the bell. Nora was arranging the soup-tureen upon the table at the moment, and Mr. Bartlett, who chanced to be in the hall, opened the door. A young man whom he remembered first in pinafores and then knickerbockers, but who now wore long trousers, and sported a watch-chain—a young man who came to his office once a month regularly on a collecting tour—went through with the formality of handing him a card, with the request that it be given to Miss Spencer. Mechanically, Mr. Bartlett glanced over it and read:

"Mr. James Murray Penn, Weekly Item."

Mr. Bartlett looked from the card to the young man, and said:

"Sorry, Jim, but she can't see you. You will have to excuse her."

"Certainly. Very sorry. Hope she is quite well. Is there any one here I can interview in her stead?"

Mr. Bartlett considered a moment, then replied:

"Yes, you can interview me."

The young man blushed rosy red. Reportorial duties had but lately been added to his honors in the line of collector, typo, and devil, and as yet failed to sit easily upon him. For one thing, however, he was thankful; that was that he was to do the interviewing instead of his vis-a-vis, planted before him as firmly as—as—the Colossus at Rhodes, he thought, recalling one of the editor's last able editorials. Somehow, when Bartlett interviewed a fellow he made him "give it up," whether he wanted to or not, and the results of interviews with him were so likely to land parties in the lock-up, and give them free trips to the penitentiary.

Nevertheless, the interview was brief. Mr. Murray was not encouraged to become discursive and give it latitude. With much stam-

mering and hesitancy, he inquired into the facts concerning the position taken by Miss Spencer the evening before, at the public meeting, on Christian Science. Mr. Bartlett gave clear, crisp, unelaborated replies, that were transferred in that Horace Greeley form of short-hand which is popular with reporters to the penny-pad taken from his pocket.

That the *Item* would not appear for several days subsequent, and all this haste and illegibility was therefore unnecessary, did not at all impair Mr. Murray's enjoyment of the same. His mission being fulfilled, he tipped his hat and went away. Francis Bartlett closed the door upon his retreat with a sigh. "Poor Sadie!" said he to himself.

Dinner was scarcely over, when an elder from one of the Churches, accompanied by one of his daughters, arrived, to congratulate Miss Spencer upon the step she had taken, and urge that she now go further and join the Church. They had just retired, somewhat disappointed at not having seen the young lady, when the deacon of another came, with his wife, on a duplicate mission.

These were good people, who meant well; but in this case their zeal was not according to knowledge. With a refined and sensitive nature like Sadie's, two steps so important yet dissimilar as renouncing Christian Science and uniting with the Church, could not follow one upon the other so closely. Identifying herself with Christ's followers was something she was certain to do in the natural course of events; but the balm of time, which heals the heart's open wound, and tears of repentance, which give clearer vision to the eyes that shed them, were first needful here. God's hand was upon her, and its tender touch was the only one that could lead her now.

Mr. Bartlett did not return to the office, but remained to assist his mother in the impromptu reception which followed, and see that the right things were said and done. He exerted himself to be agreeable and natural, and pass off the occurrence, to which all referred as something they were "so glad" about, as the only thing that could reasonably have been expected of a young woman so intelligent as his cousin.

After a time all of them went away, by ones and twos and threes. The hall table was covered with cards and bouquets, to be presented with the compliments of one and another. Francis heaved another sigh as the door closed after the last one of them.

"This is a horrible world," said he. "No-body has a right to himself or his own life in it. Sadie never would have done it—she never could—if she had known what a noise it was going to make."

"Everything makes a noise," said his mother, shrugging her shoulders. "The world's so hollow, you see. It's like talking into an empty barrel."

"You're right, mother; and it's a blessed acoustic arrangement that gives us the sound as an accessory after the fact instead of before it. If the noise heralded it, nobody would ever do anything brave or independent."

Yes, it had been a weary day. He acknowledged this as he sat in the shadow of the trees once more, and looked for a glimmer of light in Sadie's window. Day's superb painting of Titian tints had been withdrawn with the sun, but night's exquisite etching filled its place on nature's walls. Each tree and shrub and blossom, and every swaying branch, was silhouetted by the moon, whose light transformed them from the fixed and limited environments of common daylight objects into subtle possibilities—half-seen, half-guessed at things, from which imagination conjures what it will.

Day rends the veil that hides old Earth's most holy secrets from the vulgar gaze, which, seeing, does not comprehend; but night restores it, woven from her shadows and her dews; and only reverent souls can lift its mystic sweep to see the shine of cherubic wings, and talk with God in silence.

Nothing was wanting to perfect the hour but Sadie's presence and her love; and, even as he thought it, she came stealing dejectedly through the shadows, all in white, as she used to be in the old times, and sat down silently beside him. He saw that her gown was the most careless of house dresses, and her yellow hair was all disordered under the white, fleecy shawl, with its fringe, like valley lilies, thrown over her head. He did not speak, but put his hand out and took hers in a close clasp, from which she drew it suddenly to wipe away her tears.

"Poor girl!" said he. "Poor little Sadie!" And this tall, goddess-like creature listened to and did not repudiate the designation.

"You must n't cry, dear," said he, softly. At which she cried the more.

"I—I am so terribly disgraced," said she.

"Nonsense, child! Nothing of the sort!
You have done a brave thing—you—"

"But I was a fool first; you know I was, Frank!"

This was the third time she had called him "Frank"—the old, familiar name—since he came home.

"I ought to have known better-I ought to have seen what I was doing, before I committed such ignorant, inexcusable blunders. A child, who had gone to Sunday-school, would have shown more sense than I. I wanted to be learned, and I have been an ignoramus; I wanted to do good, and have brought myself only harm. Nobody will ever have any respect for my opinions again! O, if people could only go back, and live the past over again, how differently they would do! But, whether it stands for the best or the worst that is in us, it stands forever. Whether it stands for what we are, or the cast-off chrysalis of what we were, it is eternal. I have never represented the best that is in me, and now I never shall. One's past will not stay behind; but it gets in front of one, like the angel with the sword, and forbids the going forward. I wish there was no evil-O, how I wish it! Why were we not made incapable of mistakes and sins?"

"All of us have frequent occasion to cry

'Peccavi!' but let us not weary God's ear with the continuous cry. It is better, with Paul, to do heroic 'forgetting' of 'those things that are behind.' When I was in a Western city at one time, stopping at a hotel, I heard a terrible racket one night in the room next to mine, as if some one was receiving a severe beating. I paid but little attention to it on the first occasion, but after hearing it again and again, I asked the landlord what it meant. He said the occupant of the room was a young Japanese from Tokio, attending the convention of civil engineers then being held in the city, and that every night, before retiring, he whipped the white devils out of his clothes.

"We are often called upon to scourge white devils of errors out of our theories and line of conduct; but I don't believe it is especially gratifying to our Maker to have us keep up the whipping upon ourselves forever. The very fact that we may feel inclined to do it, is what might be called *prima facie* evidence that it is no longer necessary."

"But I can not pardon myself for the lightness with which I rushed into such a false position."

"My best hopes for you lie in the recogni-

tion of that very lightness. Had you stopped to weigh the matter, and seriously examine its claims to your espousal and championship, and then ridden your tilt in its favor, yours would have been a hopeless case. I recollect, when I was a youngster, of having a terrible attack of toothache; and mother, as if she was offering me a sweetmeat, told me I might go and get the tooth pulled. I remember how I went singing along the street (supposing myself the envy of other boys), 'I'm going down to Dr. Brown's to get a tooth pulled.' Some of the boys gave me rather knowing grins. One of them, I remember, exclaimed, 'Jiminy Crickets!' I didn't understand what they meant, though, until after I'd felt the forceps. There are some things we should never undertake at all if we did n't do it lightly."

"Don't you feel ashamed of me, then?" asked she in a sort of plaintive wonder, with a surprised and wistful expression on the face, set in the picturesque environment of the white shawl.

"Yes, terribly," responded this hypocrite.
"There is only one thing for you to do now."
She looked up questioningly.

"Change your name," said he, catching

her hand just in time to intercept a threatened flight. "You must always have known that I love you, Sadie. No one in all the world, to my mind, is like you. This worry and trouble is very ephemeral, and will soon pass away. Society is always in a state of transition, from one fine frenzy of foolishness to another. If it should sometime see a panoramic review of all its former follies and conceits passing before it, I wonder if, like Judas, it would not feel like going out and hanging itself? You are going to rise up from this to a nobler and grander womanhood. Shall it not be to bless my life as its helper and companion?"

She trembled with excitement and unspeakable joy, but she only said:

"I do want to live on a higher level—I do indeed, Frank!"

"We will go away to Europe, and when you come back with dresses from Worth's and Felix's—"

She laughed gleefully.

"What do you know about Felix? And the idea of setting up such standards for me! I care more now to make sure of the fine linen which is the righteousness of the saints."

She said this last with a sweet, shy, hesitating seriousness that touched his heart.

"Well, then, joking aside, we will settle up our affairs, and go away from here and begin anew in a wider field. I want a city for my practice, you for social life and better opportunities of culture; and if you want real mission-work, you will find it ready to your hand. I have thought of a change like this for myself. It is no sudden resolution. Will you go with me, darling? Will you go with me?"

She moved a little nearer to him in the shadows. The white shawl fell away from the face whose outlines it had half concealed, and disclosed its changed and transfiguring expression of happiness. Seeing this, Francis stole an intrepid arm about her neck, and heaved a sigh of perfect content as he laid his trembling hand upon her cheek.











